THE MAN JESUS:

A Course of Lectures.

BY

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"His life was gentle; and the elements
So mixed in him, that Nature might stand up
And say to all the world, This was a Man!"

BOSTON:
ROBERTS BROTHERS.
1881.

University Press:
John Wilson and Son, Cambridge.

C. P. G.

If where thou art thou knowest more than I
Can know, amid these earthly vapors dim,
Of that great Soul, who often, in the days
That are no more, allured our common thought,
And made our homeward talk grow strangely deep
And tender, underneath the quiet stars,—
If there thou knowest I have done him wrong,
Failing in aught to give him reverence due,
Thou wilt forgive; for surely thou wilt know
That truth is now as precious to my soul
As in those dear and unforgotten days
When life was sweeter than it e'er can be
Again, until again I am with thee.

PREFACE.

RELIGIOUS opinion is the resultant of many infinitesimal shocks, and I shall not be suspected by any generous person of imagining that I have written any final word about a theme which has inspired hundreds and thousands of volumes and will doubtless inspire as many more. I have but endeavored, with the help of many eminent scholars, of whom I would name THEODOR KEIM with special admiration, to write a book which shall contribute something to a rational understanding of the human greatness of Jesus in the minds of those who have not the time or opportunity to read those voluminous writings in which the modern study of the life of Jesus has embodied its conjectures and results.

BROOKLYN, May 5, 1881.

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"Our highest Orpheus walked in Judea eighteen hundred years ago. His sphere-melody, flowing in wild, native tones, took captive the ravished souls of men; and, being of a truth sphere-melody, still flows and sounds, though now with thousand-fold accompaniments and rich symphonies, through all our hearts, and modulates and divinely leads them."

Sartor Resartus.

I.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION.

"After all that Biblical critics and antiquarian research have raked from the dust of antiquity in proof of the genuineness and authenticity of the books of the New Testament, credibility still labors with the fact that the age in which these books were received and put in circulation was one in which the science of criticism as developed by the moderns — the science which scrutinizes statements, balances evidence for and against, and sifts the true from the false — did not exist; an age when a boundless credulity disposed men to believe in wonders as readily as in ordinary events, requiring no stronger proof in the case of the former than sufficed to establish the latter, namely, hearsay and vulgar report; an age when literary honesty was a virtue almost unknown, and when, consequently, literary forgeries were as common as genuine productions, and transcribers of sacred books did not scruple to alter the text in the interest of personal views and doctrinal prepossessions."

Frederic Henry Hedge.

THE MAN JESUS.

I.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION.

IN studying the life of any person the first question that presents itself, or ought to present itself, is one of biographical material. Neglecting this, the best intentions frequently come to little or to naught. It often happens that the material is not homogeneous, that the sources of information differ among themselves, and it becomes necessary that we should make, if not an absolute, at least a relative choice. Otherwise an element of confusion is introduced into every subsequent stage of our procedure. In the case of Jesus of Nazareth we are bound by these conditions as unreservedly as in any other, if the historical importance attaching to his name does not put us under heavier bonds to proceed from first to last with the utmost caution. Whatever the importance of this study, its interest cannot, I think, be overrated. It would

argue either exceeding coarseness or dulness not to be profoundly interested in the actual career and character of one whom the most civilized portion of the world for sixteen hundred years has worshipped as a god, and who, whatever his original force, has been the most engrossing figure that has ever trod the stage of human history.

Voltaire is reported as saying of Jesus, "Let me never hear that man's name again;" and I am not unaware that there are those in this community who have something of the feeling which that petulant remark expressed. They are tired of hearing Aristides called the just. Their sense of disproportion between the person and the myth goads them to this extreme. But what may be natural to an unguarded moment ought not to be allowed to become a habit of the mind. Jesus is not responsible for the extravagance and absurdity of his mythologists. Because they have enveloped him in legend and fable there is all the more reason why we should seek to penetrate to his actual character. We are none of us, I hope, indifferent to real greatness, nor feel so rich in what we have already gathered of its fame, that we are not always more than glad to add a little to our store. The presumption is, that behind a myth like that of Jesus there is a man, and it is only honorable and decent for us to see whether it is so or not. Behind the myth of Buddha we are glad to find a man. It

speaks ill for both our science and morality if we are not equally glad to find one behind the myth of Jesus. Both science and morality demand that we shall approach Jesus with as little hostile bias as characterizes our approach to Buddha or Zoroaster or Mohammed.

An inquiry into the sources of our information concerning Jesus was of comparatively small importance so long as the New Testament was regarded as a miraculously inspired volume, and as such was considered free from any error or exaggeration. There was still room for study of the way in which the miraculous history of the New Testament joined on to the secular history of the times, and of the impression it made upon these times; and within the limits of the New Testament there were elements apparently conflicting which had to be compelled into some show of agreement. The world has hardly anything to show more ingenious than some of the devices which were resorted to under the inspiration of this method. The Fourth Gospel, it was suggested, was supplementary to the other three, and all divergent accounts of an apparently single event were explained as so many different accounts of so many different events. Thus the critics, if they could not wholly satisfy themselves, satisfied the uncritical, and do unto this day.

But the doctrine of the New Testament's miraculous inspiration is no longer a doctrine that can

be entertained by any person who is at the same time honest, thoughtful, and intelligent. This is a frank expression; but I am confident it is a saying that will stand. Omit the honesty, the intelligence, or the thoughtfulness, and the saying thus mutilated would not hold good. Taken in its entirety, its force cannot be broken. Show me an intelligent man who entertains this doctrine, and the chances are ten to one that he lacks either thoughtfulness or honesty. Show me a thoughtful man who entertains it, and he must be lacking either in honesty or intelligence. Show me an honest man who entertains it, and either intelligence or thoughtfulness is a missing link in the chain of his individual completeness. For every man of honesty, intelligence, and thoughtfulness *knows* that the result of criticism is, that of the twenty-seven books of the New Testament the authorship of only four[1] is absolutely certain. But to elevate into the position of a supernatural revelation a book the authorship of six-sevenths of which is extremely doubtful, is manifestly an unwarrantable procedure. We may be tolerably sure of the authorship of another seventh. This is the extremity of critical concession. But, in order to maintain the supernatural inspiration of the New Testament, we should be certain not only of the

[1] Romans, First and Second Corinthians, and Galatians. The Pauline authorship of these even is denied by Bruno Bauer, a critic of no mean abilities.

authorship of each separate book, but of the supernatural inspiration of each individual author. In fact, our certainty on the head of authorship is confined to four books out of twenty-seven; and of the supernatural inspiration of St. Paul, the author of these four, there is not a particle of proof, while there is abundant proof at every turn of human limitation.

But books which may not wear the honors of a supernatural revelation may, used with sufficient caution, furnish us with biographical material tolerably satisfactory, even where they must be regarded as anonymous. Whether the New Testament books *do* furnish us with such material it is the principal object of this morning's lecture to discover.

But before addressing ourselves to this, let us inquire what intimation, if any, we have of Jesus, his life and teachings, beyond the confines of the New Testament. Let us begin upon the outmost verge and work our way in towards the centre. That is, let us first consider the heathen testimony, then the Jewish, then the incidental, finally the direct testimony of the New Testament.

Of contemporary reference to Jesus in pagan writers there is none whatever. The earliest is that of Tacitus, after Thucydides the greatest historian of the ancient world. But this reference is confined to a statement of the bare fact that Jesus was "executed in the reign of Tiberius by the procura-

tor, Pontius Pilate." This was written about seventy years after the death of Jesus, at which time Tacitus, the wisest of his generation, regarded the Jews as a people "without religion," as "haters of the human race," and Christianity as the meanest of the offshoots of Judaism, *exitiabilis superstitio*, —"a miserable superstition." Suetonius, writing of the Emperor Claudius near the beginning of the second century, has a single reference to Jesus,— "one Chrestos," — whom he imagines to have been a seditious Roman Jew, living in Rome, midway of the first century. And these scanty references to Jesus, the one so bare, the other so absurd, are all[1] that we have in pagan literature to enlighten us concerning the founder of a religion which in a little more than two centuries after the time of Tacitus and Suetonius became the State religion of the Roman Empire. Need I remark on the inconsequence of those who from this paucity of pagan mention infer the non-existence of Jesus? There were no railroads and telegraphs in the time of Jesus to bind the civilized world together in a network of mutual appreciation. Tacitus's general ignorance of the Jewish people would be unpardonable in any modern person, but the wonder is that he set down correctly the circumstances of the death of Jesus.

[1] The letter of the Younger Pliny from Bithynia, 104 A. D., is vaguely instructive about the Christian community of that time, but contains nothing about Jesus.

But that the writings of the Jews themselves, outside of the New Testament, should be as little fruitful of information concerning Jesus as the writings of Suetonius and Tacitus is more remarkable. The first Christian century covered the literary activity of two Jewish writers of remarkable ability, Philo and Josephus. Philo died in 60, Josephus in 95 A. D. But Philo mentions neither Jesus nor the Christians, and of Josephus we are obliged to make substantially the same confession. There are two passages in popular editions of Josephus which refer to Jesus. The less celebrated may possibly contain these authentic words, "James the brother of Jesus, called the Christ;" although the fact that the passage containing these words was outrageously tampered with by Christian hands throws doubt on even so much as I have quoted. The more celebrated passage reads: "At that time appeared a certain Jesus, a wise man, if indeed he may be called a man; for he was a worker of miracles, a teacher of such men as receive the truth with joy, and he drew to himself many Jews and many also of the Greeks. This was the Christ. And when, at the instigation of our chief men, Pilate condemned him to the cross, those who had first loved him did not fall away. For he appeared to them alive again on the third day, according as the holy prophets had declared this and a thousand other wonderful things of him. To this day the

sect of Christians called after him exists." This beautiful passage has been quoted thousands of times, and is still quoted as the testimony of a cultured Jew to the substantial truth of the New Testament. But, alas, the early Christian fathers, who knew the writings of Josephus well enough, knew nothing of this passage. When at length it appears in the "Antiquities," it is now in one place and now in another. Efforts the most heroic to save a part of it have proved as futile as the attempt to save the whole. But the significance of the passage cannot be overrated. It is a capital example of the literary ethics of the early Christians. The original interpolator of this passage thought he "verily did God service" when he inserted it in the "Antiquities" of the Jewish historian. He did nothing that was not done a thousand times from Ezra to Augustine. Pseudonymous writing and interpolation were favorite methods of religious propagandism.

What are we to infer from the entire silence of Josephus (or almost entire, allowing the words "James the brother of Jesus, called the Christ," to be authentic)? Many have been the conjectures. But the most plausible is, that in the world-view of Josephus, writing fifty years after the time of Jesus, the Christian community was too small a dot to merit his consideration.

The literature of Judaism outside of Philo and

Josephus is equally barren of any real information. The Talmudic writings do little more than repeat in various forms the slander of his illegitimate birth, — a retort so natural to the assertion of his miraculous birth that we encounter it in the earliest writings hostile to Christianity that have come down to us. Shall we be more successful if we seek for information concerning Jesus in Christian writings of the second century outside of those contained in the New Testament? This literature, as preserved to us, is neither inconsiderable in bulk nor unimportant, especially as admitting us to the inner life of the Christian community in the second century; but it adds very little to our New Testament sources, — hardly more than a few sentences of apparent genuineness, having on them the stamp of Jesus' individuality. If there is any exception to be taken to this statement, it must be in favor of the Gospel according to the Hebrews. Time was when our New Testament Matthew was thought to be a translation of this, but one of the fixed facts of modern criticism is that our Matthew is not a translation. And still its relation to the Gospel according to the Hebrews is one of the most interesting questions of New Testament criticism. The agreements of the two are many, and where they disagree the uncanonical work sometimes preserves the more reliable tradition. The Gospel of the Hebrews seems to have existed in various forms, in this respect being

in no wise different perhaps from the New Testament gospels. Whether its earliest form was the germ of our own Matthew, or the two branched from a common stock, is a dilemma which impales on either horn an equal number of New Testament scholars. This much, however, is tolerably certain: that throughout the second century the Gospel according to the Hebrews enjoyed a reputation not inferior to that of our New Testament gospels. The decline of its reputation synchronized with the decay of Jewish Christianity.

The upshot of these considerations is, that we are thrust back on the New Testament as our only valid source of information concerning the life and character of Jesus. Josephus and other writers are of inestimable value as giving us the political and social and religious setting of his life. But for knowledge of the man Jesus, of his idea and his aims, and of the outward form of his career, the New Testament is our only hope. If this hope fails, the pillared firmament of his starry fame is rottenness; the base of Christianity, so far as it was personal and individual, is built on stubble.

Within the confines of the New Testament we have a great variety of literature. We have an extensive epistolary portion; a book of history, the Acts of the Apostles; a prophetic allegory, the Revelation of St. John; and four biographies of Jesus.

I had written to this point when my attention

was called to the following statement of a writer in the New York "Tribune," the vagary of no simple-minded correspondent, but a statement to which this distinguished journal gave the weight of its authority:—

"The compilation of the New Testament was the "work of six of the Apostles, and two of the dis-"ciples who attended them in their journeyings. "The Four Gospels were the work of men who were "contemporary with Christ: the first of them was "published a few years after his ascension, and cir-"culated among the very people in whose midst "his life was passed. The Epistles were written "separately by five of the Apostles, from fifteen to "thirty-five years after the Saviour left this earth. "The history known as the Acts of the Apostles "was published about the year 65 A. D. The book "of Revelation was written and made known by "John, one of the five above referred to, about the "year 96 A. D.; and though Martin Luther, among "others equally eminent, doubted that John really "wrote it, the weight of modern critical opinion is "certainly in favor of his authorship."

Were this a correct statement of the facts in the case, our search for valid information concerning the life and death of Jesus would be a nominal affair. But there is hardly a single sentence in this statement which is not outrageously and ridiculously false. It is an admirable summary of the

popular traditional belief concerning the books of the New Testament. It is a monstrous, if not wicked, perversion of the results of modern scientific criticism, even where this is most conservative. It is safe to say that there is not a person living, and having any right to express an opinion on these subjects, who could subscribe to this statement, who would not, in fact, reject it altogether.

To proceed for a moment to details: The book of Revelation, says this statement, was written about 96 A. D. But if there is a single fixed point in the New Testament chronology, it is the date of Revelation, and this date is 69 A. D. Acts, says this statement, was published about the year 65 A. D. About the year 125 A. D., says the intelligent critic. "The Epistles," says this statement, "were written separately by five of the Apostles, from fifteen to thirty-five years after the Saviour left this earth." From twenty to one hundred and forty years after the death of Jesus, says the intelligent critic, who at the same time reduces the number of Apostles who had a hand in them from five to one; namely, St. Paul, to whom at the utmost eight Epistles are conceded of the thirteen which bear his superscription in the New Testaments of to-day. "The Four Gospels were the work of men who were contemporary with Christ: the first of them was published a few years after his ascension, and circulated among the very people in whose midst

his life was passed." So says the journalist. The intelligent critic says: Of the existence of the Four Gospels we learn with certainty only in the fourth quarter of the second century, one hundred and fifty years after the death of Jesus. Of their authorship we are entirely ignorant. The earliest, Matthew, cannot have received its present form much before the end of the first century. The latest, John, dates from about the year 135. Possibly from a few years earlier than this, possibly from a few years later.

Such being the actual critical result as regards the contents of the New Testament, it is evident that much greater caution must be observed in the use of them than would be necessary if the popular conception corresponded at any single point with the reality. Certain, or tolerably so, that in the genuine Epistles of St. Paul we have a set of writings belonging to a period ranging from twenty to thirty years after the death of Jesus, we turn to these with generous expectations. Surely, here if anywhere, we say, we shall learn something about Jesus that will be interesting and satisfactory. But we are doomed to disappointment once again. Paul is almost absolutely silent concerning the actual life of Jesus. Once, and once only, does he quote his words. He does not make a single reference to any event in his whole life, save as the last supper is implied in his solitary quotation of his words.

The Christ of Paul was not a person, but an idea. He took no pains to learn the facts about the individual Jesus. He actually boasted that the Apostles had taught him nothing. His Christ was an ideal conception, evolved from his own feeling and imagination, and taking on new powers and attributes from year to year to suit each new emergency. Not the life but the death and resurrection of Jesus are his constant theme. Nevertheless, in a general way, the witness of Paul to Jesus is of inestimable value. It is an overwhelming refutation of the hypothesis that the actual Jesus was next to nobody. Only a tremendous personal force could have laid hold on the imagination and the conscience of Paul with overmastering power. The sympathies and admirations of gigantic men do not attach themselves to men of lower stature than their own.

The writings nearest the time of Jesus after the Epistles of Paul are the Epistle to the Hebrews (certainly not Paul's) and the book of Revelation. These were both written from 65 to 70 A. D. But they have for us no illumination. The Epistle to the Hebrews attenuates the personality of Jesus into a dogmatic cloud, less palpable, if possible, than the Christ of Paul. The Revelationist is too intent upon the Jesus who is coming in the clouds of heaven to have a thought of the Jesus whom he had personally known. He dares not look back-

ward for a moment lest he should miss the first premonitory gleam of the approaching day of the Lord. The Epistles other than Paul's and the book of Acts are characterized by a similar paucity of definite information. To the Four Gospels, then, we are driven as our last resort.

But here again there is an inner and an outer court. The inner court is that of the first three Gospels, called the *Synoptics*, because a synopsis can be made of their contents taken together; the outer court is that of the Fourth Gospel. Were this written by John, we should be brought by it very near to the person of Jesus. But that it was not written by John may be considered as well-nigh an established point in modern criticism, where this is not hopelessly apologetic. It is the policy of the "Encyclopædia Britannica" to put itself on the safe side of every doubtful question. Its articles are generally coextensive with the conquered ground of modern science. Now, in the tenth volume of this Encyclopædia, recently published, there is an article on the Four Gospels, written by Dr. E. A. Abbott, an English churchman of high standing and great erudition. The article is eminently conservative, and assigns to the Synoptics an earlier date than common, but of the claims of the Fourth Gospel to be the work of the Apostle John or a first-century work of anybody it effectually disposes. Of this Gospel, as John's, we have

no mention till the second century is drawing to its close. Of its existence we have little if any notice earlier than this. But we have ample evidence that if it was in existence midway of the second century,[1] and back of this for five and twenty years, it was little known and less esteemed, and certainly was not regarded as the work of an Apostle. That it was meant to pass for John's there cannot be a doubt; but so was the book of Daniel meant to pass for Daniel's, who had been dead three hundred years when it was written. To seek prestige for one's own thought under the cover of some mighty name was for hundreds of years before and after the time of Jesus the commonest proceeding. It was a species of self-abnegation. The writer sacrificed his personal renown to some high cause that had enlisted his enthusiasm and demanded his service.

That one biography of a person is written subsequently to another is not necessarily a circumstance that is prejudicial to the later work. The latest is frequently the best. But if it is so, it must be in virtue of a closer adherence to, or a more vital appreciation of, the fundamental biographical material. The trouble with John's Gospel is not so much that

[1] Dr. Ezra Abbot has argued laboriously that it was in existence at this time, and used by Justin Martyr. But granting so much, the Johannine authorship is still almost as far removed as ever.

it was written after the others, as that in its entire tone and structure it is different from the others, and different from them in such a way that we are compelled to feel that we are reading no biography, but a magnificent theological romance, an epic poem of which the hero is the Logos, the incarnate Word. This Gospel was not written as a biography, but to set forth Jesus as the Logos. Everything is made subservient to this end. It is quite possible that it embodies sayings and events that have a traditional value over and above those which are freely borrowed from the Synoptists. But they are few and far between. The discourses of the Fourth Gospel are its deepest condemnation, for all the noble passages which they contain. The speech of Dr. Johnson is not so different from that of Robert Burns as the speech of the Fourth Gospel Jesus from that of the Jesus of the Synoptists. "Brief and concise were the sentences uttered by him," says Justin Martyr, — proof positive that he knew nothing of the Fourth Gospel, or gave it no heed. His words are true of Matthew, Mark, and Luke. They mock the endless disquisitions of John. In the Synoptics nothing is so characteristic of Jesus as the parables. In the Fourth Gospel there is not a single parable. James Freeman Clarke has recently suggested that Jesus spoke in parables to the simple Galileans, in disquisitions to the temple doctors of Jerusalem. But the longest

disquisitions of the Fourth Gospel are addressed, not to the temple doctors, but to his disciples on the last day of his life. Again, the framework of the Fourth Gospel is so different from the framework of the others, making his ministry three years long instead of one, and mainly Judean instead of mainly Galilean, that we are compelled to make a choice. The time is short for a detailed account of this matter, but were it not I could, I think, convince you, as I am myself convinced, that in attempting to construct a consistent idea of the life and character of Jesus the Fourth Gospel must be counted out. Ingenuity has exhausted itself in the endeavor to obtain a different result, and all in vain. The Fourth Gospel is not less valuable on this account. Only its value henceforth is that of a contribution to our knowledge of second-century ideas. Every true word that it contains is just as true as ever. Every beautiful thought is just as beautiful now as before. But the character of Jesus gains immensely by this transferrence. He is no longer the scorner and hater of his own people. He is no longer the esoteric theosophist of an inner circle of disciples, praying, if not for these alone, for those only beyond them who shall believe on him through their word, and never rising into the invigorating atmosphere of self-forgetfulness and universal love. Since the sponge dipped in vinegar moistened the dying lips of Jesus, no such service

has been rendered him as that of the critics who have transferred the Fourth Gospel from the province of biography to that of theological controversy and imaginative dogma.

Of the three Gospels that still remain to us the relative values are still in some dispute. That we are certain of the authorship of any one of them only a very ignorant or exceedingly dogmatic person would be likely to declare. Nor of the time when they assumed their present shapes can we be more than proximately sure. We are for the first time definitely aware of their existence as Matthew's, Mark's, and Luke's, from 170 to 180 A. D. Nor are we aware of their existence in any shape or under any name at a much earlier period. Writing in the middle of the second century, Justin Martyr quotes from certain "Memoirs of the Apostles," as he calls them, so freely that a consistent biography of Jesus might be collected from his quotations. But he never names the authors of these memoirs. His quotations from them often disagree with our Gospels, and seldom agree with them; and if our Gospels (the Synoptics) were used by him, they were used in conjunction with others which were apparently as highly, if not more highly, esteemed. If we had only external evidence to rely upon, it would be quite impossible to predicate the existence of our Synoptic Gospels earlier than the middle of the second century. Later than

this we cannot put them, because at least a quarter of a century is necessary to establish the reputation they enjoyed in 175–180 A. D. From various evidence we may however infer with tolerable safety that Matthew reached its present form near the beginning of the second century, Luke about 115 A. D., and Mark about 120. This statement differs widely from the journalist's which I have quoted: "The Four Gospels were the work of men who were contemporary with Christ: the first of them was published a few years after his ascension, and circulated among the very people in whose midst his life was passed." And some of you may think my statement is so different from this that we might as well abandon all attempt to draw out the life and character of Jesus from writings so far removed in time from his own day, — from seventy to ninety years. But Rome was not built in a day, nor were the Synoptic Gospels any more. They were not made; they grew. And they were long in growing. It would almost appear as if the titles of these Gospels, "according to Matthew," and so on, — *according to*, not *by*, — implied a consciousness that these writings were impersonal, that to no one man could be assigned their authorship. This is the truth concerning them. Luke, you will remember, begins his Gospel, "Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed

among us;" and the evidences are plentiful that the author uses these "many" freely, our own Matthew being among them. Everywhere in the Synoptics there is an effect of fragments joined together, not too carefully; of different traditions; of different documents freely used with little discrimination. Hence in the same Gospel different accounts of one and the same thing, different and sometimes contradictory renderings of one and the same saying, as where Jesus is reported to have said that "a prophet *is*," and again that "a prophet is *not*, without honor save in his own country." In Matthew the final editor is evidently less Jewish than his material, and in Luke there is a similar inconsistency.

These characteristics of the Gospels which, at first thought, affect our valuation of them injuriously, prove, in the last analysis, exceedingly fortunate. For these characteristics to develop, there must have been a considerable extent of time. The mental movement of the time was slow; intercommunication between different communities was precarious. And hence the fact that the Synoptics are *aggregations* proves that the process of their aggregation must have extended back a score or two of years into the first century of our era. There is a tradition common to them all which can be extracted and shown to have a rude integrity. The differentiation of the present Gospels from this

original tradition could not have been suddenly accomplished. It is even possible that Matthew arrived at a written form before the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A. D. It contains sentences that could not have originated after that event, and the crudity of the method of aggregation is evinced by the fact that these sentences are allowed to stand and bear the contradiction of events. The result at which we finally arrive, therefore, is this: *That from thirty to forty years after the death of Jesus the tradition of his life and ministry and death had shaped itself into the basis of our present Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke.* The contents of this fundamental tradition (fundamental to our Gospels, but in its turn, no doubt, the result of various accretions) — the contents of this tradition are as flattering to the anti-supernaturalist as he could reasonably expect. Accounts of miracles are here, even some of the most startling; but there is not a hint of the miraculous birth of Jesus, nor of the legends of his infancy, and the tradition ends with the discovery that his tomb is empty, without a word to signalize that he was seen again by any woman or disciple. In this tradition the personality of Jesus is revealed in lines so firm and strong that the accretions of a later time add little to their force. The man behind the myth is there, no thin abstraction, but an individual with blood in his veins, and in his heart the love of human kind.

I would not have you think that it is my idea that we should do well to reject every subsequent accretion to this primitive tradition. I have no doubt that there are sayings and events in the accretions just as valid as those of the primitive tradition, although the tendency away from this is a tendency from fact to fancy. Even beyond the confines of the Synoptics I believe that there are genuine traditions. In John the story of the woman taken in adultery is an interpolation. It is found in none of the early manuscripts, but it has the stamp of Jesus' individuality as the rest of the Gospel has not. This is the real Gospel, and the rest is the interpolation.

To extract from the Synoptics a consistent picture of the life and character of Jesus is no simple task, when we consider the method of their origination. At the very threshold of our task we must abandon the idea of attaining to absolute certainty in regard to any saying or event. But we must remember that where memory is most relied upon it is most exact. We must be on our guard against the afterthoughts of later generations. We must from the consent of various traditions build up a standard of judgment by which we can discriminate between the actual speech or incident and the mythical transformation.

Last, but not least, the question of the miraculous narratives embedded in the Gospels, even in

the tradition fundamental to them all, clamors for a solution. But so far as we are at present concerned, the question is one of simple fact: Did such and such things happen? This question might be answered in the affirmative in every case, and still the cause of theological miracle, of supernatural interference, would not be advanced a single inch. For the essence of the theological miracle is the violation of natural law. The moment the miracle ceases to be this, it ceases to be supernatural and to have any power to prove a supernatural revelation. Let the theologian concede that the events in question did not involve violations of law, but only manifestation of some higher law than any known, and he has given up his case. Before it was discovered, the law of gravitation was a higher law than any known; but it was not a whit more supernatural before its discovery than it was afterward. A miracle in the sense of the thorough-going and consistent supernaturalist, the only miracle that can prove a revelation supernatural, is, we are obliged to say, impossible. We are told that to say this is presumptuous. How dare we put a limit to the power of the Eternal? We put no limit. We only say that the laws of nature, as we call them, are so many subjective classifications of the observed facts of nature, and the moment we come upon a fact not included in them we are simply obliged to modify our hitherto unduly narrow con-

ception of the laws of nature, so that they will include the latest fact. Professor Huxley's illustration is here absolutely perfect. "A day-fly," he says, "has better grounds for calling a thunderstorm supernatural than has man to say that the most astonishing event that can be imagined is beyond the scope of natural causes." Considering the fractional character of our experience, the presumption is in affirming any fact to be a violation of natural law.

A supernatural miracle is impossible; but what of the events recorded in the New Testament, and commonly spoken of as miracles? If every one of them could be established by sufficient evidence, the result would only be to widen our conception of natural law. But can they be established? There are those who argue that if any of our Gospels can be pushed back to within thirty or forty years of Jesus' lifetime, the reality of these events must be conceded. No, not if the Gospels, or their fundamental tradition, could be pushed back to within ten years of the lifetime of Jesus. Ten years, or even five, would be sufficient for the generation of every miraculous story in the New Testament, not here and now, but then and there. For then and there the scientific conception of nature's orderly procedure had not dawned upon the mind. Two centuries later Tertullian said, "I believe *because* it is impossible." This was a favorite canon

of belief for hundreds of years before and for hundreds of years after the time of Jesus. The mind was predisposed to belief in supernatural events, in prodigies and wonders. Every attempt to cut off the time of Jesus and his Apostles from all earlier and later times has proved entirely futile. The stream of miraculous pretension poured itself through his time, a flood that had been flowing for centuries, and would flow on for centuries to come. There is, indeed, much better evidence for the miracles recorded by St. Augustine than for any recorded in the New Testament. We come much nearer the events, and we know something of the narrators, where in the New Testament we know nothing. Never was there a place and time where and when stories of prodigy and miracle were more likely to be fashioned without any basis of reality, and to obtain credence without any evidence, than in the years immediately succeeding the lifetime of Jesus. Considering the place and time, the wonder is that the miraculous element in the New Testament is not much more obtrusive than it is, much more extravagant.

For, coming face to face with the Synoptic miracles, the highest number that they reach is twenty in Matthew, nineteen in Luke, and eighteen in Mark. There are only eleven miracles, outside the birth and resurrection stories, common to Matthew, Mark, and Luke. It is frequently assumed that if

we cannot account for the origin of the narratives of miracle in any other way, then we must allow to them a basis of miraculous fact. As if wonderful stories did not every day obtain currency in this humdrum modern life of ours, to account for whose origin is impossible! And yet we know them to be false. But it is not impossible to trace with tolerable assurance the development of some of the miraculous narratives from a non-miraculous beginning. There is no one theory that will account for all of them. The vice of criticism has been a contrary persuasion. Hence the mistakes of Paulus, Strauss, and others in pushing their favorite theories too far. In the Fourth Gospel almost every miracle-story is the picture of an idea; but in the Synoptics, where we have growth instead of manufacture, it will be found that almost every miracle-story has a genesis and history peculiar to itself. The mythical theory of Strauss accounts for some. That is, the stories are reflections of similar stories in the Old Testament, or inferences from the Messiahship of Jesus. The Messiah was expected to do thus and so: Jesus was the Messiah: Jesus had done thus and so. This was the inevitable argument. In a mediæval miracle-play, Adam was represented going across the stage, — *going to be created.* Now, a good many miracle-stories in the New Testament can be surprised in this pre-existent state. Thus, in Luke, Jesus likens the Jewish nation to an un-

fruitful fig-tree, and curses it as such. This is the miracle of the fig-tree blasted by the curse of Jesus in Matthew and Mark in its pre-existent state, going across the New Testament stage, — going to be created. The feeding of the five thousand is very possibly a parable, — that of the sower, it may be, turned into a miraculous occurrence. So the Lazarus *parable* of the Third Gospel becomes the Lazarus *miracle* of the Fourth. Several other miracle-stories bear such a close relation to the words of Jesus, that it is difficult to resist the impression that they originated in symbolic utterances, — his own or such as were suggested by his words.

And these various transformations of words into miraculous events were made more natural and easy by the fact, which may freely be conceded, that upon a certain class of nervous diseases Jesus exercised a certain influence. This class of diseases was regarded as the result of demoniacal possession. Jesus himself, undoubtedly, shared in the common opinion as to their nature, and thus was in a position to affect them, which for a sceptic would have been impossible. It was as necessary for him to believe in himself as for the people to believe in him, ere any diseased imagination could be quieted. If any of you think that I am waxing superstitious, I will only say that Strauss concedes as much as this; and one can be as superstitious as Strauss with perfect safety. "It would have been strange,

indeed," he says, "if there had been no cases in which the force of excited imagination, impressions half spiritual, half sensuous, produced either actual removal or temporary mitigation of the complaint." But cures of this sort were so far from implying anything supernatural that they were scarcely remarkable. The exorcism of demons was exceedingly common. Jesus appeals to it as proof of the validity of his own method. He allows the success of the exorcism. There was no conflict here with modern science. For diseases of the imagination, to this day the most effective remedies are psychological. Much more must it have been so in the time of Jesus, when all concerned were alike under the dominion of an appalling superstition, the belief in demoniacal possession. But given a few cures of the so-called demoniacs by Jesus, also the spiritual soil and atmosphere of Palestine, and these cures would bring forth in a dozen or twenty years a crop of miracle-stories so extensive that not one quarter of its bulk could be husbanded within the limits of the New Testament. And a few cures of this sort, or temporary alleviations, are, I am persuaded, the bottom facts which underlie the entire structure of the miraculous in the New Testament, and in Christian history.[1]

[1] This is the conclusion reached by Dr. E. A. Abbott, the distinguished Church of England writer, of whom I have already spoken. See his Oxford Sermons.

Such a conclusion takes nothing from the fame of Jesus which he cannot easily spare. And it takes nothing from the stock of our habitual ideas to which we cannot give the heartiest God-speed. Not faith in miracle but faith in law has been the inspiration of the best endeavor all the centuries down. Because men have believed in the stability of nature they have gone forward, when without such a belief they would have fallen palsied by the way. That what has been will be; that the great laws will keep their trysts with men forever without fail, — all science and all civilization rest upon this faith. The miraculous, in its original sense, is *the wonderful*, and in this sense — the highest possible — what are the miracles of law's imagined violation to the miracles of inviolate law? The miraculous birth of Jesus! As if every birth into this world were not a wonder vast enough to stir

> "Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears."

His immaculate conception! Thank God that century-living slur upon the purity of all the mothers in the world but one is hastening to its doom! The star of Bethlehem! As if any star that trembles on the edge of dawn or eve, or any of the least in heaven,

> "when the host
> Is out, at once, to the despair of night,"

were not too wonderful for heart to hold! The feeding of five thousand! The feeding of some fourteen hundred millions every day, and these but one of many hundred generations, appeals more powerfully to my imagination. But the resurrection of Jesus from the dead, — the miracle of miracles! What shall we say of this? Say that nothing which deserves the name of proof can be anywhere found for it, and that, if it could be, the isolated, unrelated fact would have for us no instruction and no consolation, while the resurrection and the life of this fair world of spring, after so many frozen winter days, is an unspeakable wonder and delight, and a tender pledge and prophecy withal, that seeming death may be the harbinger of higher life to every human soul.

"When Winter comes, can Spring be far behind?"

II.

THE PLACE AND TIME.

"A HUMAN life, I think, should be well rooted in some spot of a native land, where it may get the love of tender kinship for the face of earth, for the labors men go forth to, for the sounds and accents that haunt it, for whatever will give that early home a familiar, unmistakable difference amidst the future widening of knowledge: a spot where the definiteness of early memories may be inwrought with affection, and kindly acquaintance with all neighbors, even to the dogs and donkeys, may spread, not by sentimental effort and reflection, but as a sweet habit of the blood."

GEORGE ELIOT.

II.

THE PLACE AND TIME.

HOWEVER exalted the genius of the individual, it is not independent of the place and time of its appearance among men. Whatever the original organism, these determine to an immense degree the outcome of the life. Shakspere and Dante might have been born exactly as they were, in body and in brain; but if Shakspere had been born in Florence in the twelfth century, and Dante in England in the sixteenth, we should have had no Shakspere's plays as we now have them, and no *Divina Commedia.* And so, whatever personal force was lodged in Jesus, its manifestation was determined by his country and his race, and by the immediate social and political and religious conditions of his time. Had these been different, the biography of Jesus would not have been the same.

Strangely enough, the native country of Jesus is known to us as Palestine. Strangely enough, I say, because this name is evidently only another

form of Philistine. The most inveterate enemies of Israel have sealed the country with their name. Such is the irony of history. The geographical extent of modern Palestine was never for any considerable length of time under a single government. From the invasion, about 1280, to Saul, about 1060 B. C., it was the battle-ground of warring tribes. These, forced into a single nation by Saul, and consolidated by David, remained a unit for some eighty years, and then, upon the death of Solomon, split asunder into ten northern and two southern tribes, forming the respective kingdoms of Judah and Israel. The northern kingdom kept the national name; but with the southern went the national genius for religion, and the hard task of maintaining its continuity through an immense variety of political change. Once again, in the time of the heroic Maccabees, in the second century B. C., the sundered parts gravitated into unity, or where they did not gravitate were forced into it, and John Hyrcanus ruled over an extent of country equal to that of both the northern and the southern kingdoms of an earlier day. But the condition of Judea's universal influence was also the condition of her political instability. So situated that she could diffuse her influence on every side, this situation made her soil the marching-ground and camping-ground and battle-field of contending nations, — Assyria, Babylonia, Egypt,

Syria, Greece, and Rome. The last, invoked as an ally in the second century B. C., in the first became a conqueror, Pompeius capturing the Holy City, and forcing his way, with quite un-Roman disrespect for the religion of an alien people, into the holy of holies, where, to his great astonishment, he found — no image of a god! Hence the inference of Tacitus that the Jews had "no religion." Jerusalem was again besieged twenty-six years later, — in the year 37 B. C.; this time by Herod the Great, a man of evil fame among both Jews and Christians; with good reason in the former case, but with little in the latter beyond his general immorality. He died four years before the beginning of the Christian era.[1] Herod was an Idumean, that is, an Edomite; and by his accession to the throne of Judea a hundred cherished prophecies against the Edomites were brought to grief and shame. Hence, in part, the hatred of the Jews. But it had other grounds. The least of these was his many marriages and murders. His grinding taxation was more deeply felt, but his cordial relations with the Greek and Roman heathen world were his capital offence. His subjects saw clearly enough that he had no sympathy with

[1] Which the birth of Jesus antedates some years, — from three to eight. But the "slaughter of the innocents" is not thus made good. This legend of the Infancy is one of the most palpably absurd.

their religion. He might besiege their holy city with manifest unwillingness; he might allow the sacrificial beasts to be carried into the city all through the siege; he might even rebuild the temple in a fashion to which Solomon's was cheap; and he might refrain from entering the sanctuary, which was sacred to the priests alone. Nevertheless, all this was toleration. His heart was with the heathen and their ways. He loved their theatres and games. He surrounded himself with their courtiers; he cultivated their manners. The easy-going part of the community forgave him these defects, because his rule brought to them peace and plenty and material splendor. He answered pretty well to their idea of the Messiah. But the more religious hated him with perfect hatred.

I should like to dwell upon the character and career of this man. He is one of the most dramatic figures in all history. Almost as cruel as David, almost as licentious as Solomon, he had great abilities and many good qualities. He had a genuine interest in the prosperity of his people, and had not his passion for magnificent buildings made his taxes so excessive, the material conditions of the country would have been unexampled in their prosperity. But the prosperity must have been astonishing for such a drain as his upon it to be in any way possible. His tragic passion for the beautiful

Mariamne might well inspire one of the noblest dramas of Voltaire, and Dean Stanley thinks that to the passionate popular devotion to her and to her name we are indebted for the fact that Mary is the name of names in the New Testament. But the fascination of an individual character must not divert us from more general considerations.

After much plotting and counter-plotting, much fighting and killing, the kingdom of Herod was divided into three tetrarchies, over each one of which was set a son of Herod: Archelaus over that comprising Judea and Samaria, Philip over the upper country east of the Jordan, Herod Antipas over the lower trans-Jordanic country and Galilee. Of this Herod Antipas, by no means a bad ruler from a secular point of view, Jesus of Nazareth was a subject all his life long. He and Philip both ruled for a long period; but Archelaus was deposed after a few years, and Judea and Samaria became a province of Roman Syria, governed by a procurator of the Syrian governor. From 26 to 36 A. D. the procurator was Pontius Pilate, who little thought what ignominy he was preparing for himself when he good-naturedly allowed the populace to have its way with a young Galilean who had mortally offended its religious sentiments. But I must not anticipate.

The political divisions of the country suggest a method for our treatment of its physical configura-

tion and general character. The political divisions correspond to differences of physical geography. Judea was a parched and arid land, as if the fierce heats of its religious enthusiasm had dried up the juices of its soil, the streams among its hills. Galilee was so rich and fertile that the rabbis said the Galilean "waded in oil," and that it was easier to raise a forest of olive-trees in Galilee than one child in Judea. Galilee is not now what it was in the time of Jesus. The saying is, "God made the country, man made the town;" but the fact is that man makes and unmakes the country hardly less than the city. And when he unmakes it, it is a harder thing to build it up again than "the waste places of Jerusalem." The smoking ruins of a Boston or Chicago give place in a few years to a new growth of stores and houses finer than the old. But an agricultural district, seared and scraped by centuries of careless tillage or neglect, cannot be redeemed so quickly. This is the condition of the Galilean hills to-day. The Turk is everywhere the ruin of the soil. Lands which were the very garden of the Lord he has made almost as barren as the rock. And Galilee is no exception to the rule.

It is a mountainous country. Hermon, in the extreme north, is half as high again as our Mount Washington; the hills in the vicinity of Nazareth, about as high as our Wachusett. These hills are

natural fountains of innumerable streams, which in the time of Jesus made every slope and valley teem with vegetable life. No spot of ground, according to Josephus, was without an owner. The land was too valuable for pasturage. Tillage was universal. On the eastern side of northern Galilee lay the lake called Tiberias and Gennesareth and the Sea of Galilee. Men called it "the Eye of Galilee." It was an eye of heavenly blue, deep set in yellow limestone mountains. The eastern shore was gloomy with basaltic cliffs. The western, especially the plain of Gennesareth, was simply marvellous in its fertility, in the abundance and variety of its plants and trees. The lake, which is only some twelve or thirteen miles long and six miles broad, had three large towns and many villages upon its shores. Its waters swarmed with fish, which, over and above all the demands of home consumption, gave employment to a host of busy fishermen and traffickers. The surface of the lake must have been almost crowded with the small craft of the fishermen, — the "ships" of our New Testament, which would be boats in a more sensible translation.

The evidence is abundant that the Galilee of Herod Antipas and Jesus was the scene of an intensely active, thronging, energetic life. It was full of towns and hamlets. Josephus enumerates two hundred and four townships and fifteen forti-

fied places. These in one thousand square miles, — less than the area of Berkshire County, Massachusetts. But his estimate of a population of three million for this district cannot be accepted. Josephus drew a long bow sometimes for the admiration of his Roman audience. Half as many would have made mountainous Galilee as populous as level Flanders, one of the most populous districts in the world. But without any exaggeration the young eyes of Jesus must have looked out upon a wonderfully crowded, busy life in town and field. The great commercial road connecting Ptolemais on the sea-coast with Damascus, a road along which caravans were always passing east and west, right through the heart of Galilee, touching the lake country at Capernaum, — this great commercial road contributed immensely to the stir and bustle of Galilean life. It brought many foreigners into the country, — Phenicians, Syrians, Arabs, even Greeks. Moreover, it furnished Gentile employment to hundreds of Galileans. They were camel-drivers, they were guides. Here was the secret of the dislike and pity and contempt of the Judeans of the south for the people of Galilee. They were too little isolated from the heathen world to suit their exclusive notions of unqualified purity. They had cities[1] in their midst which were predominantly heathen in their architecture and the

[1] Cæsarea Philippi, Sepphoris, Julias.

manner of their life. But the Galileans, if not so exclusive as the Jews, had a patriotism of their own which was not less real, and they had the courage of their opinions. There were no braver men in Palestine. But their patriotism was more political than that of the south and less religious. What the Jew dreaded most was the defilement of heathenism. What the Galilean dreaded most was its oppression. But the Galileans were not lukewarm in their religiousness. They went up by thousands to the great feasts at Jerusalem, nearly a hundred miles away. Once there, their rude dialect made them the laughing-stock of the metropolitan cockneys, but doubtless it was tit for tat.

I must not make my picture of the Galilean life too charming and idyllic. From overcrowding of the population came frequent poverty. There was, too, much physical degeneracy. There was the restlessness which is inseparable from vivacity. Nervous diseases, allied with Syrian superstitions, produced a plentiful crop of mongrel ailments, half physical, half intellectual. The Galilean temperament had Celtic warmth and also Celtic heat. It was a temperament of sudden ebullitions, of action and reaction, inconstant, fickle. In a general way, the sincerity of our Synoptic Gospels is evinced by their reflection here and there of every trait of Galilean life and character that I have named. These traits may all be gathered from

beyond the Gospel history. But they might be gathered from that history as well.[1]

Between Galilee and Judea lay the country of Samaria, politically a part of the province of Judea, spiritually abhorring this relation. The Samaria of Jesus' time was a district of some four hundred square miles. This district was hardly less fertile than Galilee, and was noted especially for its noble forests and its rich pasturage. Here too were "leagues of sun-illumined corn." But the country did not begin to be so beautiful as Galilee. Its mountains had not the variety of the north. As were the mountains so were the people, — comparatively featureless, a mixed race, descended from Persian colonists coalescing with a remnant of the people left upon the soil after the first captivity.[2] The enmity between the Jews and Samaritans was a growth of centuries. It began with the rupture of the kingdom on the death of Solomon, or with the causes that led to that rupture. It increased with the refusal of the Jews to allow the Samaritans to assist them in rebuilding the temple after the Babylonian captivity, and with the interference of the Samaritans to prevent the

[1] The life of Jesus was so sparingly related to the country east of the Jordan that I pass it by, though it is not without historic interest, especially as Pella, in trans-Jordanic Galilee, was the retreat of nascent Christianity during the Jewish war.

[2] 719 B. C.

rebuilding. The conquest of Samaria by John Hyrcanus, a century and a half before the time of Jesus, was a fresh ground of hatred on the Samaritan side. The complacency with which the Samaritans accepted the rule of each new conqueror, except Hyrcanus, filled the Jews with pious indignation. They were the Swiss of Palestine; their mercenaries were here and there and everywhere. They were on especially good terms with Herod. This was the last offence before the birth of Jesus. The enmity thus generated and increased showed itself in a hundred ways. The New Testament is again true to the life in its reflection of this enmity. Galileans going to Jerusalem generally deemed it best to skirt the border of Samaria. There even a cup of cold water was denied the weary pilgrim. Upon the border of Samaria and Judea fight and foray were the order of the day. To eat bread with a Samaritan was as to eat the flesh of swine. In the Fourth Gospel the woman of Samaria is regarded by some critics as Samaria itself, her five husbands typifying the five gods whom the Samaritans were charged with worshipping. Equally the Samaritans hated the religious pretensions of the Jews. To the punctilious formalism of the latter it was essential that the feasts of the new moons should be exactly observed, and signals were invented — one of the earliest systems of telegraphy — to inform

the country round about Jerusalem. But the Samaritans maliciously confused the signals, so that other means of information had to be invented. Worst of all, the Samaritans at one time, during the boyhood of Jesus, just before the Feast of the Passover, when all the priests and sacred vessels had been purified, scattered a lot of human bones in the courts of the temple. The celebrants had to be turned away and the feast put off on account of this act of sacrilege. Against this background of rage and bitterness the parable of the Good Samaritan in the New Testament is like a snow-white lily painted upon a canvas smeared with blood.

The southern borders of Samaria anticipate, to some extent, the barrenness of Judea. This barrenness was not universal. The hill-country has delightful slopes and valleys fanned by breezes from the sea, and here and there, elsewhere, there are oases in the harsh, arid region, which is embossed with naked limestone mountains, set upon flat, uninteresting plains. Even the valley of the Jordan does not belie the general character of Judea. In summer then, as now, its adjacent country was completely dried up. "The Jordan, with its acacias, tamarisks, and copses of willows and reeds, forms a green riband on a brown plain, surrounded by barren steep slopes, bare limestone ravines, and crumbling chalk-beds." [1] "The river tarries," says Pliny,

[1] Hausrath's New Testament Times, Vol. I. p. 34.

"as though it unwillingly approached the abominable sea which swallows it up and spoils its precious waters by uniting them with its own reeking waves." As we approach the Dead Sea, vegetation entirely ceases. Bituminous springs send up their pitchy bubbles to the surface of the sea, and characterize the entire country round about. West of the sea are certain grassy plains embosomed in the rocky hills. These were, in Jesus' time, the favorite haunts of the Essenes, as also was En Gedi, the only spot of verdure on the precipitous basaltic banks of the mysterious, melancholy sea whose waters, it is not unlikely, hide the earthquake-buried towns of Sodom and Gomorrah, or certain towns with which these names were traditionally associated. One may admit so much without attempting to identify any particular mass of salt or bitumen in the vicinity with Lot's wife, though it is not uncommon for people to become stationary by looking backward when they should be looking forward.

The history of Judea is the history of its capital, even more than that of Greece or Italy. And, like the sites of Rome and Athens, — one a mere island in a malarious marsh, the other an inhospitable cliff, — the site of Jerusalem was chosen without any reference to its utility, except, perhaps, as a freebooters' stronghold. It is the most forbidding spot in the whole country, — a barren spur of rock

upon the water-shed between the Jordan and the sea, twelve hours' journey from the former, eight from the latter. It is difficult for the imagination, burdened with impressions of the Jerusalem of to-day, — a squalid mixture of incongruous elements of national and religious life, buried more deeply under pious frauds than under the pulverized ruins of its former splendor, — to make real the city over which Jesus wept. Its general aspect was, perhaps, more forbidding then than it is now. Its triple walls, its frowning battlements, its gloomy towers, menacing every gate and angle, every possible point of attack, made it a fortress-city. Only as approached from the east, over the Mount of Olives, from which point of view the temple, situated high above the populous portions of the city, crowned the forbidding pile with its magnificence of golden roofs and marble colonnades, was it inviting to the eye. So Jesus must have seen it when, for the first time, he went up with his parents to one of the great feasts, according to the custom of the time.

Jerusalem was everything to Judea, and the temple was everything to Jerusalem. Washington without the Capitol would be no more insignificant than Jerusalem would have been without the temple. Jerusalem was an ecclesiastical, as Washington is a political city. But the ecclesiastics in that capital were much more numerous than

the politicians in ours. Of priests alone, Josephus reckons twenty thousand, most of them living in the city. Add to these the swarms of Levites and the "scribes and Pharisees," and you have a large ecclesiastical fraction of the population. Still further add the Oriental pomp of the Herodian government, attractive even while repellent, the throng of courtiers and ambassadors from every quarter, the soldiers of the Roman garrison clanking up and down the hilly streets and through the fore-court of the temple, and you can imagine what a magnet Jerusalem must have been to draw the people to itself, — not only those for whom its brilliant life contrasted with the average dreariness of Judea, but those who had the dew of Hermon on their pilgrim feet. The political unity of the nation having been broken, the unifying impulse of the temple was felt all the more deeply. Galilee and Judea might be under different governments, but so long as prayerful faces there, as here, turned temple-ward, and eager hearts yearned for the sacred courts, the separation of the parts was superficial. There was an underlying unity. Even when no one of the great feasts was proceeding, the temple must have presented a busy scene, with its motley throng of sacrificers, — women, in gratitude for new-born children, bringing thank-offerings, "a pair of turtle-doves or two young pigeons;" lepers who had been healed; the bleat-

ing of the sacrificial sheep and lowing of the oxen, meanwhile, blending with muttered formularies of devotion, and evermore the altars sending up their whirling clouds of smoke, as if to blind the eye of Heaven to the sin and folly of mankind. But, after all, it was the various feasts that measured the significance of the temple-service in its relations to the national life. At the great feasts the city and the surrounding villages were packed with visitors. Country towns at a distance from the city were depopulated to swell the pilgrim-crowd. Villages were emptied of every inhabitant, young or old. A comparatively modest calculation estimates the temporary population of Jerusalem and the vicinity at such times at three millions. A Galilean carpenter and his wife losing their boy in such a crowd as this might well "seek him sorrowing."

But the importance of Jerusalem to the national life was not exhausted by the temple, its daily ritual and periodic festivals. In the time of Jesus the synagogue occupied a more commanding position in the national sentiment than the temple itself. That the munificence of Herod had built the temple infected it with a subtile taint for the most religious. But the synagogue was wholly without taint. The tradition of the synagogue was that of unqualified patriotism, while the tradition of the temple involved elements of subserviency to

foreign rule. And the life of the synagogue culminated in Jerusalem. The Sanhedrin, or high court of Jerusalem, was indeed the national synagogue, a heart whose pulses beat through all the land and sympathized with the most distant perturbations. Every town had its local Sanhedrin, which was a petty court of justice, looking to the high court in Jerusalem for the correct interpretation of the law. But the seat of justice was the synagogue. "Beware of men," said Jesus, "for they will deliver you up to the Sanhedrins [the local Sanhedrin is here intended], and they will scourge you in their synagogues." Forty stripes was a favorite punishment; but Paul, as you remember, writes, "Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one." Mercy had dictated thirty-nine, lest, the executioner making a miscount, the punishment should be in excess of the law. But while the functions of the local Sanhedrin were almost purely executive, those of the great Sanhedrin of the capital were largely judicial. Capital punishment it could not execute. The procurator must issue the death-warrant, as in the case of Jesus. The great Sanhedrin was mainly a theological court, principally engrossed in questions relating to the interpretation of the Mosaic law with reference to the temple service and Levitical cleanness, and so on. And therefore this national Sanhedrin was much more truly central to the synagogue life of the nation than to the local Sanhedrins.

The temple was in Jerusalem; the synagogue was omnipresent. The synagogue was the Jewish church or meeting-house, and there were four hundred and eighty synagogues in Jerusalem alone, some of them very simple, some of them costly buildings. In the time of Jesus every small town in Judea and Galilee had at least one synagogue, — a plain rectangular hall, with a portico "decorated with the tasteless spiral ornamentation of Jewish art."[1] Not only on the Sabbath, but on Mondays and Thursdays, the market-days of every week, the people flocked into the synagogue to hear the Scriptures read and to engage in exercises of devotion. These exercises, with the exposition of the Scriptures, were exceedingly protracted. Sometimes debate ran high, and calls to order were as vociferous as in a primary meeting of to-day. It was the scribe, the interpreter of the law, that created the synagogue. But in its turn the synagogue had done much to develop the scribes into an influential class. These took their name, "the scribes," from the fact that they only were entitled to make copies of the law for the use of newly established synagogues. But in the time of Jesus the scribes included the entire class of persons devoted to the study and the teaching of the law. The rabbi was a developed scribe, one who was qualified and ordained to be a teacher of others. His was one of

[1] Renan, Life of Jesus, Ch. VIII.

the chief seats in the synagogue. In the synagogue, in his own house, in the chambers of the temple, he gathered his disciples about him. Rabbinism was thoroughly democratic. Any man who could prove himself apt at exposition was welcome to become a rabbi, no matter how humble his position. It is as a rabbi that Jesus makes his first appearance as an independent teacher, after the imprisonment of John. The rabbi could not be a "hireling minister." He could not teach for money. And therefore frequently the rabbis, even the most celebrated, labored with their hands. Hillel, the most justly celebrated of all rabbis, was a day-laborer.

It must be confessed that the teachings of the rabbis were often wearisome and petty and inane. Never was such refinement on a written code as theirs. The details of sacrifice and ritualistic purity were elaborated with microscopic nicety. Rabbinism would have had a precept ready for every possible event in life. It would have left nothing in suspense, nothing at the mercy of individual judgment and conscience. Of things allowed and things forbidden it would have made a list that should be absolutely exhaustive. If a sheep fell into a water-tank upon the Sabbath, should it be taken out, or fed until the next day in the tank? If a cow calved upon the Sabbath, should the cow be led to water, or should water be carried to the cow?

What ought to be done, when the Passover had begun, if the sacrificial knife had not been properly placed? Hillel was made the leader of the Great Sanhedrin for his conclusive answer to this important question. Thanks to this foolish casuistry, many a sensible or at least natural provision of the law was attenuated into the thinnest possible absurdity. The law forbade the cooking of a kid in its mother's milk. Whereupon the rabbis forbade the eating of kid and milk on the same day, lest, by some dreadful chance, the milk should be that of the kid's mother, and in the stomach of the eater kid and milk be cooked together! We need to know all this to comprehend the force and courage of Jesus' injunction to his disciples, "Eat such things as are set before you."

These illustrations might be indefinitely extended; but if they are amusing they are also sad. And it ought not to be forgotten that there was another side to rabbinism. It had its degrees of absurdity. It had also its degrees of earnestness, nobility, and humanity. It is not too much to say that every noblest saying in the New Testament can find a parallel in the rabbinical teachings. Renan has called Hillel the teacher of Jesus, and though Hillel died in the year 6 A. D., when Jesus was about ten years old, and though Jesus had probably never set eyes upon him, the saying of Renan has much to recommend it. For the say-

ings of Hillel were upon every breeze that wafted health and joy to the young heart of Jesus. And if he could argue concerning the levitical purity of an egg laid on the Sabbath, he could also enunciate the golden rule, and many another precept full of ethical wisdom and humanity. "Do not believe in thyself," he said, "until the day of death." "Do not judge thy neighbor till thou hast stood in his place." "Whosoever does not increase in knowledge decreases."

It was in their treatment of the Sabbath that the rabbis reached the height of the ridiculous. And yet they taught that danger *always* supersedes the Sabbath. Yes, "even for the sake of the tiniest babe," they said it might be broken. "For the babe will keep many a Sabbath yet for the one that has been broken for it."[1]

Rabbinism did not satisfy itself with instructing the grown people of the nation. Its devotion to the children was prophetic of the educational conscience of to-day. "Paradise," it said, "is at the feet of mothers." "The world is only saved by the breath of the school-children." "The schools must not be interrupted for the rebuilding of the temple."

The religious life of Palestine in the time of Jesus was almost universal, but it was not entirely

[1] For a compact summary of illustrations of the better teaching of the rabbis, see Emanuel Deutsch, pp. 55–58.

homogeneous. Within a century the difference of Pharisees and Sadducees had been signalized by deadly animosities, for whose gratification blood had flowed in torrents. But in the time of Jesus their divergence was less absolute, They sat together in the Sanhedrin. They had much in common. Perhaps the smallness of their difference made their mutual hatred more intense. The origin of both Pharisees and Sadducees is exceedingly obscure. In the second century B. C., both parties appear upon the stage in full maturity. At that time the Sadducees were the priestly aristocracy, and the Pharisees were the democratic, patriotic advocates of religious and political exclusiveness. And they were this down to the time of Jesus and in his time. To identify them with the scribes is a mistake which is too common. The Pharisees were always scribes, in the inclusive sense of men versed in the law, but the scribes were not all Pharisees. In the time of Jesus the rabbis of the Great Sanhedrin were, for the most part, Sadducees. Another mistake is in supposing that the Sadducees were devoted exclusively to the Law of the Old Testament, and were indifferent to the Prophets and the Writings. That they valued the Law above the Prophets and the Writings is evident, but the Pharisees did the same. Still another mistake is the idea that the Sadducees were wholly averse to the traditional exposition of the Law,

wholly confined to the original letter. They had and cherished a body of traditional exposition which they claimed to be an emanation of "the great synagogue," — a fictitious claim even if the great synagogue itself was a reality. But what is true is that the Pharisees gave to the traditional exposition of the Scriptures a much wider scope than did the Sadducees. The law itself was not underrated. God himself was supposed to study it three hours a day. But the traditional exposition was held in yet higher esteem. "The words of the law are weighty and light; the words of the scribes are all weighty," was a dictum of the Pharisees. The nature of this traditional exposition we have already learned in speaking of the scribes. For the most part it was puerile. But this is not: "Reckon thyself among the oppressed, not among the oppressors;" nor this, "When reviled, revile not again." "Repent a day before thy death," said one suspicious of death-bed repentances. The question, "Is life worth living?" which has of late been freely agitated, convulsed the rival schools of Hillelites and Shammaites for years. The answer was finally, No. "But since man is here," the sages added, "let him be careful in his actions."

The passion for Levitical purity was, however, the most striking characteristic of the Pharisees, and their discussions were most frequently upon

this head. Did the flesh only of a carcass defile, or also the hide and the bones? Did contact with Gentile books defile, or only contact with the sacred books of the Gentiles? Which hand should be washed first? Should the ablution stop at the wrist? Should the hands be held up or down? These refinements reached their acme in the idea that even the Scriptures were outwardly impure, because written upon animal skins. No wonder the Sadducees said, "The Pharisees will wash the face of the sun."

The patriotism of the Pharisees was of a piece with this passion for Levitical purity. The Pharisees were always the anti-foreign party, the native Judeans, so to speak, opposed in turn to every representative of foreign domination. It was not the oppression of the foreigner so much as his contact that made him hateful in Pharisaic eyes. The patriotism of the Pharisee was a corollary of his religious exclusiveness. It was not the only patriotism of the time; but it was the most intense. For example: Pontius Pilate ordered the Roman standards which bore the emperor's image to be carried into Jerusalem by night. Day brought the knowledge of their presence. Whereupon thousands flocked to Cæsarea to demand of Pilate their withdrawal from the city. He ordered the petitioners away. They would not go. He surrounded them with his soldiery, and threatened to cut them

in pieces if they did not cease from their entreaties. They bared their throats, and begged for death in preference to submission. At last, as on another occasion better known, the procurator consented to their will. This was when Jesus was about five and twenty. So when Caligula ordered his image set up in the temple, the fields were left unsown, while thousands went to Ptolemais and begged the governor Petronius to prevent the sacrilege; and he acceded, at the risk of his own life. The sentiments implied in such terrific scenes were the inevitable result of Pharisaic teaching. The leaven of the Pharisees may have been hypocrisy, as Jesus said; but only a sublime sincerity could have prompted men to do and dare as thousands of their followers did for their religion. Jesus, however, was not the first to charge them with hypocrisy and self-righteousness. Their own leaders anticipated his most drastic sayings. They distinguished seven different sorts of Pharisee,— the best *the Pharisee from love*, who obeys God because he loves him with all his heart.

The most absurd mistake about the Sadducees is the idea that they were the rationalistic party, and that their denial of the resurrection of the body was a result of their rationalism. They were the conservative party. They denied the resurrection of the body because it was not a doctrine of the Law or the Prophets. For the same reason they

denied the Pharisaic angelology. That they were more complacent than the Pharisees with Herod and the Romans is a proof not of their progressive instincts, but of their general lack of earnestness. They were the hierarchy, — the courses of the priests were drawn almost entirely from their ranks, — and when did a priestly hierarchy ever do anything but succumb to temporal power, when by so doing it could save its own prestige or its own perquisites? The Sadducees demand from us but little sympathy or admiration. Their contention with the Pharisees was largely a contention for their own prerogative. In order to exaggerate this they insisted that the Levitical purity of the priest was all-important. In order to detract from this, the Pharisees insisted that the Levitical purity of the vessels and the instruments of sacrifice was the principal thing.

The sect or order of the Essenes is a more interesting phenomenon. Never mentioned in the New Testament, there are so many striking analogies between their thought and that of Jesus, that many have jumped to the conclusion that Jesus was himself a representative of their school. A close investigation is not confirmatory of this idea. Essenism was Pharisaism logically carried out. In despair of keeping himself "unspotted from the world" while living in it, the Essene drew apart into a community of his own, in which the doctrines

of Levitical purity were developed with unwavering consistency. The result was a strange admixture of conservative and seemingly progressive elements. They rejected sacrifices altogether, but in their observance of the Sabbath there were no such strict constructionists elsewhere in Judea. These traits, apparently contradictory, sprung from a common root. They rejected sacrifices for fear of contracting some Levitical taint. They were vegetarians for the same reason. They had a passion for water and for light. Various washings took up no little of their time. There were different grades in the order, and for an Essene of higher grade to touch one of lower grade was defilement, and a bath was an immediate necessity. Celibacy was the ideal and the practice for the most part, but it was not universal. There was a common table and a common purse, but individuals lived apart in houses of their own. There was a time for everything, and everything in its time; a place for everything, and everything in its place. Successful industry was as characteristic of the Essenes as of the Shakers of to-day. Bee-tending was their favorite occupation. Theirs was a peaceful, gentle, and affectionate life, without any freedom or spontaneity, a confession of the failure of society, a suicidal tendency. The logical outcome of Pharisaism, Essenism nevertheless differed from it in its insistence on the inwardness of personal right-

eousness. It anticipated the protest of Luther against Rome. If Matthew Arnold is correct in his interpretation, it anticipated at this point the central principle of Jesus, — that character does not depend so much on the objective rightfulness of actions as on their inward disposition.

There is not a circumstance which I have so far named, whether of physical environment or political rule, whether of ecclesiastical machinery or religious thought, which did not have a certain bearing on the experience of Jesus of Nazareth, an influence to shape his character and determine the limits of his action and desire. But given every one of these circumstances, and to develop the orbit of his career would still be as impossible as to develop the orbit of the earth from planetary data, paying no attention to the sun. These circumstances were the planets of his system, attracting and repelling him in various degrees. His sun, the centre of his system, was the Messianic idea of his nation. The orbit of his life described itself around that centre of intolerable heat and flame. This orbit had its aphelion, its point of farthest remove; and its perihelion, its point of nearest approach. The ministry of Jesus lies between the two; from the former to the latter was the direction of his inner consciousness and outward action, until his life was shrivelled in the consuming glare which ever lured him on.

Few subjects have received more conscientious study than the Messianic hope, and now, at length, though much remains in doubt, a few clear outlines have been well made out, which we may hope will not be blurred by any future investigation. These outlines are, however, as different as possible from those of the popular Christian exposition. The gist of this exposition is that the Messianic hope originated in the time of Abraham, was cherished by Moses, attained its most complete development in the age of the prophets, from 800 to 400 B. C., and then retired into comparative obscurity for centuries, to await its consummation and fulfilment in the birth and life and death of Jesus Christ, Jesus the Christ, that is to say, the Anointed, the Messiah. Such is the popular Christian exposition, and the commentary which an intelligent and scientific criticism makes upon it is this: that the Messianic hope displayed itself most characteristically and powerfully, not from 800 to 400 B. C., but from 175 B. C. to 135 A. D., and that from the birth of Jesus onward to the final extinction of the Jewish nation by the Emperor Hadrian was the period of its most remarkable growth. This criticism assures us that the Messianic element in the prophetic writings is entirely subordinate; that much that is accounted Messianic is the reflection back upon the prophets of the Messianic ideas of a later time; that even when the prophets cher-

ish the idea of a Messianic time, the idea of a personal Messiah is conspicuously absent from the text. The first great outburst of Messianic expectation is illustrated by the book of Daniel, written about 165 B. C. The crushing tyranny of the Syrian Seleucidæ struck out this spark, and from it came full soon the flame of the revolt of the heroic Maccabees. With the success of this revolt and the establishing of the Maccabean kingdom the Messianic expectation went into eclipse. It was an expectation that throve upon disaster and oppression, that sickened and grew pale on the rich diet of political success and general prosperity. Only with the enfeeblement of the Maccabean dynasty, and the incoming of the Roman Pompeius and the Idumean Herod, the hope began to gather strength and force. And so it happened that at the birth of Jesus and all through his life, and for almost exactly one hundred years after his death, the hope went on increasing in its volume and intensity. The greater the calamity and the more brutal the oppression, the higher soared this hope, and the more rapturously it sung. For proof of this we have a considerable body of literature outside of the New Testament. We have the book of Enoch, the Psalms of Solomon, the third of the Sibylline books, the Ascension of Moses, the book of Jubilees, the fourth book of Esdras, besides much in the Targums and the Talmud, that throws a flood

of light upon this interesting and important time. But the New Testament is itself an ample witness of the same phenomena. No two books were ever conceived in a more similar spirit than Daniel and Revelation; and as the tyranny of Antiochus Epiphanes struck out the first, so the tyranny of Nero struck out the second. The Jewish hope of a Messiah became in the Christian the hope of Jesus' second coming "in the clouds of heaven with great power and glory." The forms taken upon itself through all this period by the Messianic hope were exceedingly diverse. The factor of a personal Messiah was frequently wanting altogether. But in one form or another it was omnipresent and omnipotent. From the death of Herod, 4 B. C., to the death of Bar-Cochba, 132 A. D., no less than fifty different enthusiasts set up as the Messiah, and obtained more or less following. No one of these attained to general recognition before Bar-Cochba, under whose leadership the hope was quenched in seas of blood. Some saw the Messiah even in Herod the Great! This was the lowest point reached by the Messianic ideal. The Pharisees, as a rule, advised patience. God knew his own, and he would strike the hour. The Zealots were much more of Luther's mind: God cannot get along without strong men. They did their best to help him, — never were men more brave, — and what came of it was the destruction of Jerusalem

in 70 A. D., and the grinding of the ruins of the city and the remnant of the people into finer powder in the year 132.

In the fierce heats of this delusive hope the ancient Scriptures became fluid, and took on the shape of every latest expectation. Let a great soul be born into this perturbed and passionate circle of ideas and events, and he must sooner or later orient himself, — determine his relation to this all-engrossing hope and expectation. He could not be indifferent. He could not pass it by. There was no orthodox standard. The mighty hope took on a hundred various forms. In one form or another the great soul must accept it, or fashion a form of its own out of the union of his private aspirations with the floating elements of psalm and prophecy and apocalyptic vision. There came a great soul into the midst of this enormous ferment of political and religious zeal, — Jesus of Nazareth. This problem was for him to solve. It could not be evaded. And his solution of it made his life the most impressive tragedy which has, up to this time, irradiated the great stage of history with its marvellous brightness, or shadowed it with its pathetic gloom.

III.

BIRTH, YOUTH, AND TRAINING.

"I CAN remember, many years ago,
A little bright-eyed school-boy, a mere stripling,
Son of a Galilean carpenter,
From Nazareth, I think, who came one day
And sat here in the temple with the scribes,
Hearing us speak, and asking many questions,
And we were all astonished at his quickness.
And when his mother came and said, 'Behold,
Thy father and I have sought thee, sorrowing,'
He looked as one astonished, and made answer,
'How is it that ye sought me? Wist ye not
That I must be about my father's business?'
Often since then I see him here among us,
Or dream I see him, with his upraised face
Intent and eager, and I often wonder
Unto what manner of manhood he hath grown!
Perhaps a poor mechanic, like his father,
Lost in his little Galilean village,
And toiling at his craft, to die unknown,
And be no more remembered among men."

LONGFELLOW.

III.

BIRTH, YOUTH, AND TRAINING.

HAVING completed our investigation of the sources of information concerning Jesus, and of the general place and time of his career, we now come to the consideration of his individual life and character and work. Everything connected with great men has interest, and stories of their childhood and their youth are often emphasized to an extent that is out of all proportion with their intrinsic value. Of such stories concerning the childhood and the youth of Jesus a few are to be found in the New Testament, and many in the supplementary gospels, of which a great abundance has been preserved. But once for all, upon the very threshold of our task, it must be allowed that concerning the childhood and the youth of Jesus we have no reliable information. If we are to learn anything here, it must be in the way of cautious inference. The stories, each and all, in the New Testament and out of it, vanish into thin air, like ghosts at cock-crowing, the moment they are

submitted to a critical examination. They are not, therefore, without value and importance. If they tell us nothing about Jesus, they tell us much about the growth of his legend, of what men thought and said of him at various stages of this growth. This belongs rather to the history of Christian ideas than to the biography of Jesus, and therefore it is only incidentally for us. As far as the biography of Jesus is concerned, the stories of his birth and infancy and of his youth yield only a negative result. Let us not be disheartened upon this account. It was inevitable that such stories should arise. They have been the inspiration of a world of loveliness in Christian art, which has taken its subjects from the apocryphal writings of the Old and New Testaments to a much greater extent than from the canonical Scriptures. For the rest, a positive result is not wholly unattainable. By cautious inference something of fact and much of general atmosphere and circumstance can be obtained. Meantime the legends, recognized as such, please the imagination as much as ever, but do not compromise our faith in the majestic order of the world.

So long as a great man is born, it matters little where he is born, or when, so that the place and time are suitable to his genius. And therefore we shall not be distressed to find that the date of Jesus' birth cannot be definitely fixed, and that his birthplace was not Bethlehem of Judea. Our

popular chronology implies that Jesus was born 1880 years ago last Christmas-day. But this chronology is notoriously inaccurate so far as the year is concerned, and arbitrary as concerns the day. The Christian era, that is, the dating of events from the birth of Jesus, was an invention of the abbot Dionysius in the sixth century after Christ. Before this time events had been dated from the founding of Rome, or from the accession of this or that emperor to the throne. But the investigation of Dionysius was conducted without any critical acumen. The Gospels represent Jesus as being born before the death of Herod; but Herod died four years before the beginning of our era. Luke associates the birth of Jesus with a certain taxing of Quirinius. But this taxing was six years *after* the beginning of our era. The relations of Jesus to John the Baptist afford somewhat more satisfactory data. Reckoning from these, the average of critical opinion gravitates to a point three or four years before the beginning of our era. If Jesus was born, as Keim and others think, before the death of Herod, some three or four years earlier would be the true date, and this year of ours (1881) would properly be the year 1887, 1888, or 1889. Certainty is here impossible. It is only safe to say that Jesus was born from three to eight years before the time suggested by our popular chronology.

If the year of Jesus' birth is uncertain, the day is much more so. From first to last every month in the year has claimed the honor. April and May were long the favorite months, for the highly poetical but extremely uncritical reason that this was the period of nature's transition from barrenness to bloom. Moreover, the shepherds would not have been out upon the hills in December, — an argument as convincing as that of certain Russian Zealots, that the world must have been made in the fall for the Eve-tempting apples to be ripe. A more convincing argument was the necessity of Christianizing the Roman Saturnalia, the feast of "the all-conquering sun," which began December 25th. This argument was so persuasive, that in the fourth century this day was generally agreed upon. And, certainty being impossible, what more appropriate than that the first day of More Light should be made the birthday of a new religion. "Christ himself," said a perhaps over-confident preacher, "chose this day for his birthday upon this very account." Considering what Christmas is to us, we cannot be too glad that such a happy season crowns the ending year, and cheers the winter's barrenness with its perennial bloom.

The place of Jesus' birth is of much more importance than the time. That he began life a year or two before or after the death of Herod would make little difference. No more would it that he

was born in this or that particular town of Palestine. But whether he was a Judean or a Galilean is an important question. Fortunately it is one to which a satisfactory answer can be given. Jesus was a Galilean, and he was born in Nazareth. For his birth in Bethlehem we have no evidence beyond the opening chapters of Matthew and Luke; that is to say, no evidence at all. For these chapters are almost wholly mythical. Moreover, they differ much among themselves. From Matthew we should infer that Bethlehem was the parental home; from Luke, that the birth of Jesus there was on a visit to the ancestral habitat; and this is plainly a device of the mythologist to reconcile the Bethlehemite birth with the well-known Galilean extraction, — a very clumsy device, the taxing of Quirinius having been ten years or more after the birth of Jesus, and the basis of his taxation having been the dwelling-place and civil abode. But the entire story of the Bethlehemite birth is a tissue of incongruities. How such a story arose is plain enough. It was a common belief that the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem. In course of time, Jesus having claimed to be the Messiah, those who acknowledged his claim argued that he must have been born in Bethlehem. This story is no part of the primitive tradition. The Gospel according to the Hebrews, which enjoyed at least an equal authority with any of our present Gospels

for some centuries, omits it altogether. So does the second of our canonical Gospels.

But an important part of the evidence that Jesus was not born in Bethlehem is the frequent testimony of the New Testament that he was born and lived in Nazareth. This testimony is all the more striking for being indirect and unconscious. And there was no popular belief to account for this testimony as to account for the Bethlehemite legend. The Fourth Gospel represents the people as missing in Jesus the Messianic sign of Bethlehemite origin, — a sure indication that in the first quarter of the second century this legend had not obtained general currency.

Jesus was born in Nazareth, a town of Galilee, as beautiful for situation as any town within the range of Galilean loveliness. It derives all its celebrity from Jesus. There is no mention of it in the Old Testament, no mention of it in Josephus. It lies hid among the mountains, nestling upon the slope of one that rises more than a thousand feet above the level of the sea, from whose top the view, all travellers agree, is most entrancing in its loveliness. If ever, pondering his destiny, Jesus sought this mountain-top for loneliness and peace, the scene outspread before him might well have bred in him temporary forgetfulness of everything but its own beauty. Northward the poet's vision of an earthly paradise was a substantial fact.

Nazareth's straggling village street and the green vale below it lay at his feet; beyond the hills rolled on successively until the farthest broke like waves against the mass of Hermon's mighty bulk, its summit covered with everlasting snow; and westward was the sparkle of the sea. "In a spot like Nazareth," says Keim, "it is impossible to imagine a people spiritually destitute, if nature has a word to say in the development of man."

The stability of Eastern civilization enables us to reproduce with tolerable precision the dwelling in which Jesus of Nazareth was born, and grew from the pathetic helplessness of infancy into the world-helping strength of his maturity. Imagine a house of only one room, which serves for kitchen, living-room, and sleeping-room, and, when Joseph cannot work out of doors, for workshop also. Imagine the furniture as simple as the house: a piece of matting, two or three cushions or pillows on the floor of earth, two or three vessels of clay, and a big chest which serves for table, wardrobe, and general receptacle. Every picture, says Ruskin, should have "an escape into the infinite." This picture has such an escape: it is by way of a ladder leading to the roof, where on the warmer nights the growing boy must many a time have fallen asleep, his face upturned to the star-sprinkled sky.

Jesus was the son of Joseph and Mary. Any-

thing to the contrary is without foundation either of historical evidence or moral use. The genesis of the story of the miraculous birth of Jesus is so easily accounted for without supposing any basis of reality, that one must be wilfully credulous to entertain the idea for a single moment. It is of a piece with various stories predicating the miraculous birth of famous persons, especially of famous teachers of religion. Buddha and Zoroaster share with Jesus in this doubtful honor. The fundamental Gospel tradition is wholly innocent of any such idea. So, too, are the Gospels in their present shape, beyond the legends of the infancy. Paul is equally silent where he would have been voluble enough if he had heard or given a moment's heed to such a tale. No, he is contradictory rather than silent. For when he speaks of Jesus as "born of a woman," it is only the madness of dogmatic preconception that can imagine any denial of the human father. The expression was the current phrase for human generation. But we have more emphatic contradiction close at hand in the legends of the birth and infancy. Both Matthew and Luke deduce Jesus from David *through Joseph*. What are we to infer from this remarkable phenomenon, if not that these genealogies were the invention of a time when the miraculous birth of Jesus was an unheard-of fable? Strange, do you say, that the compilers of Matthew and Luke did not perceive

the incongruity between this fable and the genealogies, and left them standing side by side? No; it is hardly strange if we consider that the literary productions of the time abound in just such contradictory statements. Addition, rather than erasure, was the favorite method of literary emendation. But this particular incongruity did not wait for modern criticism to discover it. The second century perceived it, and deduced the Davidic genealogy of Jesus *through Mary*, in order to harmonize it with his miraculous birth. But in those circles of nascent Christianity which were the repositories of its most trustworthy tradition this fable found no credence. The strangest thing of all in this connection is that the Fourth Gospel, cherishing a conception of Jesus as the pre-existent Logos, nevertheless does not avail itself of the miraculous birth, but plainly intimates that Jesus was the son of Joseph in the line of human generation.

The Davidic origin of Jesus fares no better under the tests of scientific criticism than his miraculous birth. But there is evidence, as we should naturally expect, that the belief in his Davidic origin had an earlier existence than the other. Paul doubtfully, and the writer of Revelation less doubtfully, witnesses such a belief. But their grounds for it were probably no more critical than those implied in the genealogies preserved to us in Matthew and Luke, and these are mutually

destructive. From Jesus to Abraham, Matthew counts forty-two and Luke seventy-seven generations. Between David and Jesus Luke has fourteen more generations than Matthew. And this is not the worst: the descent of Jesus from David is traced by Luke in an entirely different line from that of Matthew. Luke's is the non-kingly line of David and Nathan. Matthew's is the kingly line of David and Solomon. The names throughout are almost entirely different. That Matthew's genealogy is a purely arbitrary arrangement is evidenced from the fact that it is divided into three groups of fourteen each. To the exigencies of this arrangement several generations are sacrificed without remorse. Considering the number of Solomon's wives, it is not unlikely that descendants of his were living in the time of Jesus, but that they were not known as such is proved by the universal failure to seize on any one of them and make a king of him at a time when Judea was so intensely eager for deliverance that the most miserable pretender to Davidic origin would have been hailed with general acclamation. Why Jesus was declared to be "the son of David" is so palpably evident, that the foregoing considerations are a work of supererogation. The general expectation was that the Messiah would be a descendant of David. Therefore, the Messianic claim of Jesus having been acknowledged, the inference was un-

avoidable: he must be a descendant of David. Hence the arbitrary patching up of genealogies to prove the claim. We shall waste no regrets upon its unsubstantial character. Strange that men ever thought to honor Jesus by tracing back his pedigree to the adulterous marriage of David with the wife of Uriah the Hittite! As with the miraculous birth, so with the Davidic pedigree: the result of criticism is a consummation for which we cannot be too thankful. The wonder of any birth into this world is incalculably great, unspeakably sublime; and not the dregs of royal houses, but the untainted blood of farmers and mechanics, is best to feed the brain of a great king of thought or warm the heart of a great lover of mankind.

The indignity which Christian mythology has done to Joseph, the father of Jesus, Jesus himself has recompensed to him a thousand times over, by naming the divine providence, and love, and pity, Abba, Father. Never would this name have been so frequently upon his lips, as the expression of his highest spiritual ideal and with such an accent of tenderness, if his own filial experience had not led him to associate with it a hundred thoughts of gratitude and joy. There is more direct testimony concerning the mother, but it is without critical value. But here, too, there is inferential ground upon which we can stand with tolerable confidence. That in his mother he saw and rever-

enced "the ever womanly" is suggested by the exquisite regard for women which pervades like an aroma all his traditional speech and action in respect to them, — a regard which Renan has smirched with sentimental imputations, the mere reflections of his personal taste, which find no real justification in the New Testament, in or between the lines. The home into which Jesus was born was childless before he came, but ultimately he was one of a great swarm of children. Of brothers there were four at least, of sisters quite as many. These facts but ill comport with Mary's ecclesiastical reputation; and as soon as her legend began to shape itself, the attempt was made to show that either the brothers and sisters of Jesus were the children of Joseph by a former marriage, or his cousins-german. The dogmatic animus of these speculations is so apparent that they deserve no consideration. Our respect for Mary will not be diminished, but enhanced, by our conviction that she was the mother of many children. Jesus was her first-born. There is some likelihood in the tradition that Joseph was a good deal older than herself, and that he died about the time when Jesus came to full maturity.

Concerning the childhood and the youth of Jesus we have no direct testimony which will bear the strain of critical investigation. In Luke the silence from his birth to the baptism of John is

broken by a charming story of his visit to Jerusalem with his parents when he was twelve years old. But the story has much internal incongruity, and is evidently the vanguard of a host of stories of his childhood and his youth, which have been preserved to us in the apocryphal gospels. In these stories Jesus is a worker of miracles from his babyhood. He deputes his father to raise a namesake from the dead; he gives a miraculous harvest to the poor; he widens a bedstead for his father by lengthening one of the cross-pieces in a miraculous manner. He makes sparrows out of clay and bids them fly, and they obey him. These are the least extravagant narrations, and they are very different from the story in Luke, of his being found in the temple conversing with the rabbis. But this is found in company with them in the apocryphal Thomas, and evidently resulted from an impulse common to it and them, — from a desire to fill in the gap between the birth and the baptism of Jesus, — to make that long and painful silence vocal with his praise.

Nevertheless, the story in Luke points to the general fact that it was customary for people from all parts of Palestine to go up to Jerusalem to the great feasts. Only the men were commanded to go, but the women were permitted, and children must be taken at the age of twelve. So that it is highly probable that Jesus had been up to the

Holy City many times before his fatal journey in the last days of his life. The Holy City must have filled an important place in the imagination of every Jewish child. As Joseph bent over his work he must often have told the children playing at his feet of the temple and the other wonders he had seen there, and they, no doubt, out of the chips and shavings falling from his bench, made miniature temples and Jerusalems. And when at length Jesus was old enough to go up with his parents it must have been with a great swelling of the heart. The pilgrims assemble in some open place and start off in high spirits, the women and children riding upon mules, the men marching before and behind to protect them against robbers and Samaritans. There are banners waving, and the pilgrims sing a "psalm of degrees," or steps, like the one hundred and twentieth or one hundred and thirty-fourth, as they wind slowly along. It is a three days' journey. The last night they rest in Jericho, and the next day go over the hills to Jerusalem, climbing at length the Mount of Olives, and from its top seeing the city, with its towers and palaces spread out before them, the golden spikes of the temple roof flashing in the sunlight. And then they sing:—

"Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem!
Jerusalem, the city rebuilt,
The city that is joined together,

Whither the tribes go up,
The tribes of the Lord,
According to the law of Israel.
Pray for the peace of Jerusalem.
They shall prosper that love thee.
Peace be within thy walls,
And prosperity within thy palaces."

And singing still, the procession will go down into the valley through which runs the brook Kedron, past the Garden of Gethsemane, and under the great archway into the city.

In considering the youth and training of Jesus here is the most essential fact of all: that his time and people were religious; that religion was the great affair of life, the most engrossing theme; that temple and synagogue were the foci of the great ellipse described by the society into which Jesus of Nazareth was born, foci around which it swept with startling vehemence. The instincts of the nation were declared in almost every household in the land. The religious instruction of children was regarded as a sacred trust, and was enforced upon their parents with continual iteration. The father, rather than the mother, was the acknowledged guardian of this sacred trust. But the mother was not counted out. "Paradise is at the feet of mothers," was a rabbinic saying. And so, no doubt, from both father and mother, Jesus, the growing boy, big-eyed with wonder, heard of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, of Moses and Joshua,

of Joseph and Samuel and David, of Josiah and Ezra, of the great scribes and prophets, of the heroic Maccabees, and John Hyrcanus. And he was taught not only the history and the legends, but also the law of his race: not to make fish-pools on the Sabbath, as he is represented doing in the Gospel of the Infancy; not to touch various things regarded as impure; not to eat swine's flesh; to dread a dead caterpillar more than a live one; to practise various fasts and purifications. So much at home; but his parents, we may be sure, were not his only teachers. The village schoolmaster was the *hazzan*, or reader of the synagogue. His teaching was little more than the deaconing out of certain parts of the Old Testament for the children to memorize. Imagine the young Jesus sitting cross-legged on the floor, reciting texts in concert with his olive-cheeked companions! No critical knowledge of the Scriptures ever came to him from this teaching or the subsequent instruction of the village rabbis. With these, therefore, he accepted all the assumptions of the time concerning the age and authorship of the sacred books. He made no distinction between the first and second Isaiah; for him the Law was of Mosaic origin, and the book of Daniel a veritable production of the Babylonian prophet. Greek was a language generally comprehensible in Galilee in Jesus' time, especially in such thriving centres as

Capernaum. But that Jesus ever spoke it or read it we have no evidence. That his quotations from the Old Testament, as given in the Gospels, are mainly from the Septuagint or Greek translation of the Scriptures is frequently cited as evidence that he was acquainted with the Scriptures in this form. But the evangelists, and not Jesus, are responsible for the form of his quotations, and frequently for their substance also. He is the mouth-piece of their doctrine, and the form of his discourse reflects not so much his culture and habit as their own.

What was the relation of Jesus to the rabbinical teaching of his time? Rabbinical schools were common in his day in all the larger towns of Palestine. But Nazareth was too insignificant to enjoy this honor, and that Jesus went beyond his native village to secure advantages which he could not find there we have no reason to suppose. On the contrary, we have convincing evidence that he was never deeply indoctrinated in the peculiar learning of the rabbis, — in their hair-splitting distinctions. It may be doubted whether any amount of their teaching could have made Jesus a pedant; but it does not seem possible that, if he had any regular course of training in their schools, there could have been that divine simplicity and freshness in his words, — as of the hillside lilies, from whose golden cups his thought came back to him bee-

like, all honey-laden, — which, after all the waste of subsequent manipulation, is still, in the Synoptic Gospels, our incomparable inheritance. That the teachings of Jesus are entirely free from the rabbinical mannerism of the time it would be idle to contend, and something of this may have inhered in their original form; but we have only to compare them in their entirety with the epistles of St. Paul, the superb originality of which is marred at every turn by the pedantic quibbles and conceits which were the natural result of his rabbinical training, to realize how different the teachings of Jesus might possibly have been had he been a thorough-going pupil of the rabbis. In that saying preserved to us in the New Testament, "He taught as one having authority and *not as the scribes*," we seem to have a genuine critical perception. His was not the scholastic, the pedantic manner; and the natural inference is that he was never in the fullest sense a scribe, a pupil of the rabbis in any one of their innumerable schools.

But in the time of Jesus the rabbinic teaching was everywhere, like thistle-down in autumn weather. There was no school in Nazareth; but the village synagogue was there, open daily at the three hours of prayer, and on the Sabbath, Mondays, and Thursdays, for the reading of the Scriptures by the *hazzan*, and its exposition by some local scribe or elder, or some rabbi from abroad.

To the synagogue Jesus must have resorted with that frequency which was demanded by the custom of the time. There, many a time, he must have listened wearily to the long prayers of the Pharisees, and seen their ostentatious charity; also their scramble for the foremost seats, where they were likeliest to get a chance to speak. There, too, he must have heard the learned exposition of the law of ritual cleanness and Sabbatical observance; but, ever and anon, amid this waste of triviality, a manlier voice, speaking of "righteousness and judgment," of the coming kingdom of God, the hope of Israel, not to be long delayed. The great Hillel had become president of the Jerusalem Sanhedrin some twenty years before the birth of Jesus, and Jesus was a boy of ten or twelve when death knit up for him "the ravelled sleave of care." During the youth and early manhood of Jesus the maxims of Hillel, many of them so serious, so tender, so humane, were travelling far and wide. These maxims must have fallen on the ear of Jesus and sunk into his heart; and with these, no doubt, maxims and ideas of the Essenes. Neighbors had gone to join their peaceful and strange communities by the Dead Sea, and had returned, perhaps, to induce others to unite with them in their bee-tending communism and their stern resolve to keep "unspotted from the world." There is abundant evidence that the Essene phenomenon was an

important factor in the religious development of Jesus. His ideas of poverty, of non-resistance, of marriage, took color from this soil.

The political factor must not be overlooked. The political situation was a ferment of impassioned thought tending to violent action. The Pharisees had done their best to keep a tight rein upon the popular sentiment; but this had already taken the bit in its teeth, and was going its own way. The taxing of Quirinius, with which Luke associates the birth of Jesus, but which really happened when he was ten or twelve years old (in 6 A. D.), caused an immense excitement in the northern provinces. One Judas of Gamala, a town not far from Nazareth, just over across the lake Tiberias, became the leader of a movement full of the Messianic spirit. No man should be called "master;" no taxes should be paid to Rome. Judas himself was regarded by many as the Messiah. Thousands gathered about him, but the sedition was effectually crushed by the procurator Coponius. The fervid patriotism which Judas had inherited from his father (to murder whom was Herod's first exploit) he, in turn, bequeathed to his sons, who were conspicuous in the final struggle of Judea with the power of Rome. This movement of Judas the Gaulonite must have been the home-talk and street-talk of Nazareth for months and years. Nor could it have been otherwise with

many another ebullition. Jesus was already thirty years of age when the attempt of Pilate to compel the worship of the Roman emperor raised the blood of his subjects to fever-heat, while Galilee, from Jordan to the sea, thrilled with sympathetic horror, and cried, "How long! O Lord, how long!" It was not possible for a man of natural sensibility and earnestness to tread this fiery furnace with his feet unscarred. To the young Jesus, these passions and events must have been of boundless interest. Many a time he must have brooded over them as at his bench he drove his plane in patient service of the needs of daily life, until the "word of the Lord was like a fire shut up in his bones," till he was "weary of forbearing," and longed to thrust his gleaming sickle into the whitening harvest of the Messianic year.

But one thing is absolutely certain; namely, that Jesus did not live either a life of pedantic study or of persistent introspection. There is an expression concerning literary work and public utterance: "It smells of the lamp." The public utterance of Jesus had no such odor. It smelt of the town and field, of the wine-presses of Galilee, of the fish-markets of Gennesareth, — an odor sometimes too positive for the enjoyment of the dilettanteish. He was not without precedent for this homely speech in the rabbinical teachings of the time. Especially was the parable a favorite

vehicle for the conveyance of religious truth. But the speech of Jesus is of such sort that we may be sure its homeliness is not a borrowed article. It is the speech of a man who was no dreamer, no recluse; whose eyes were open to perceive a hundred various aspects of the busy Galilean life; the children playing in the market-place, the petty household cares, the man who goes a-borrowing; whose ears were open to take in the multitudinous stir and hum of the lake-side and populous Capernaum. The teachings of Jesus in the New Testament have a marked individuality, and it is the individuality of a man whose senses were alive and quick to catch the purport of the outward form and beauty of the world, the immense variety and significance of human life. I do not think there can be any doubt of this.

So much, for all the silence of the Gospel narratives concerning the youth and education of Jesus, or their questionable information, we may infer with tolerable certainty from the circumstances of the time and place on which his youth and early manhood fell, and from our knowledge of his subsequent career. But in the course of our investigations we have at length approached a point where, for the first time, Jesus emerges into the clear light of history. The fundamental tradition common to the Synoptic Gospels begins with the baptism of Jesus by John the Baptist. The Gos-

pel according to the Hebrews, in this respect agreeing with the fundamental tradition and with our canonical Mark, begins abruptly at the same point. And for our knowledge of John the Baptist we are not confined to the New Testament. Josephus, who is almost, if not absolutely, silent concerning Jesus, is sufficiently communicative concerning John. For three years Josephus was the disciple of his ascetic pupil, Banus, so that his opportunity for learning about the Baptist was excellent.

> "Never, believe me,
> Appear the Immortals,
> Never, alone."

The conjunction of the lives of Jesus and the Baptist is a case in point. The world's debt to the Baptist it would be hard to overrate. Unkempt ascetic though he was, it was his voice, "crying in the wilderness of Judea," that penetrated to the Galilean hills and to the carpenter's shop of Jesus, and lured him to the Jordan's side, there to arrive at length at a distinct self-consciousness, and enter on that brief career which has been the acknowledged inspiration — too little actual — of more than eighteen hundred years.

The account of John the Baptist's birth and parentage, as given in the Third Gospel, is a figment of devout imagination, completely self-destructive from the number and extent of its internal incon-

gruities. We have no reason to doubt that he was a Judean, and that he had served a long apprenticeship of ascetic solitude before he assumed the double rôle of prophet and forerunner of the kingdom of heaven. The scene of his appearance, the wilderness of Judea in the immediate vicinity of the Dead Sea, was favorable to the ascetic life, for it was exceedingly barren and unlovely. Here the Essenes had established themselves. John's local nearness to them, and the common fact of an ascetic life, have suggested to many semi-critical persons the idea that John himself was an Essene. But, in truth, his asceticism was very different from theirs, and his attitude was much more individual and spontaneous. His *baptism* was as different as possible from their *ablutions*. These were continually renewed in a vain struggle after a perfect ceremonial cleanness. The baptism was once for all, and was purely symbolic. Apparently it was his own invention, for the baptism of Jewish proselytes was more of the nature of a ceremonial ablution, and does not appear to have come into use until a later time. John had no Pharisaic or Essenic horror of ceremonial uncleanness. He mingled freely with the vilest outcasts of the land. He was an anachronism in no small degree. His character was that of a prophet of the style of Amos and Hosea. There was something imitative in the coarseness of his dress. It was a common

notion that Elijah the prophet would reappear as herald of the Messianic time. The aim of John the Baptist seems to have been to make himself *a kind of Elijah*. Many accepted him as the ancient prophet, risen from the dead. Others hailed him as the Messiah. But for this idea he was not in the least responsible, and only moderately for the other. His one idea was that the Messianic kingdom was at hand, and, seeing that no Elijah was forthcoming to proclaim the fact, he stepped into the vacant place. And he was worthy of such great election. Since the captivity, no voice so thrilling as his own had pierced the conscience of the nation to the quick. "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!" The message fell on ears attuned to it by years of suffering and humiliation. The priests and rabbis sneered at him, but the flood of popular enthusiasm swept even these, in many instances, along with it into his presence, where they quailed before the majesty of his denunciation. Thousands, from every part of Palestine, came to his baptism, and one day, with others from the North, a man of Nazareth, Jesus by name, pressed in among the Jordan's bending reeds to hear the voice whose echoes had penetrated to his Galilean home and drowned the noise of saw and hammer with their importunate appeal to his religious consciousness.

The effect upon Jesus of the Baptist's personal-

ity must have been impressive, for he received his baptism and enrolled himself as one of his disciples. No fact in all the gospel history is more substantial than this, and it a fact that is full of deep significance. At the same time it is a fact that has given the apologists and theologians no end of trouble and anxiety. For the baptism of John was *a baptism of repentance*, and necessitated *a confession of sin*. But repentance and confession of sin are ideas which have long been entirely foreign to the ecclesiastical idea of Jesus. Of course they are entirely foreign to the idea that Jesus was the infinite God; and even the humanitarian, when he has given up every other trait that is not agreeable to the pure humanity of Jesus, often clings to the dogma of his sinlessness with passionate devotion. Even within the limits of the New Testament we see the dawn of this far-reaching tendency. "I have need to be baptized of thee," says John, "and comest thou to me?" And Jesus, answering, said unto him, "Suffer it to be so now, for thus it becometh us to fulfil all ceremonies."[1] Thus to make it appear that Jesus had no need of baptism, he is charged with miserable time-serving. Surely the loss is greater than the gain. And in the Gospel according to the Hebrews Jesus is made to say, "What sin have I committed that I should go and

[1] Our present version says "righteousness," but "ceremonial righteousness" is intended.

be baptized of him?" Nevertheless he goes, to please his mother and his brethren! In Matthew the device is dishonesty; here it is weak good-nature; and there is little room for choice. Even so great a critic as Keim pleads that the baptism of Jesus was peculiar to himself, that there was a private understanding between him and the Baptist that no repentance was implied in the transaction, there being nothing of which Jesus could repent! How much more honorable and manly is the proceeding of Strauss, who says, "Even the best and purest of mankind has ever many sins to accuse himself of, much remissness, much precipitation; moreover, as the individual becomes morally purified, the moral feeling itself is more sensitive of the slightest impurity of moral motives, of the slightest deviation from the moral ideal." It is this honesty and manliness of Strauss, and not the quibbling of Keim, or the assumptions of theology, that Jesus himself endorses when he says to the young man who calls him "Good Master," "Why callest thou me good? There is one only who is good, and that is God." There is not a particle of reason for supposing that the baptism of Jesus by John was in any respect different from that of any other person. It was a baptism of repentance. It was a confession of unsatisfied ideals. An impregnable fact, it marks the purely human consciousness of Jesus up to this date; that as yet he had

no other thought of himself than as a man among men. But in the narratives of the event we find the germ of an immense dogmatic development, of which the miraculous birth of Mary, the mother of Jesus, is so far the highest term. The story of the baptism in Matthew represents a much earlier stage of the legend of Jesus than the story of his miraculous birth in the preceding chapter. The Spirit descends on Jesus, making him the Messiah *after his baptism.* Surely a superfluous business if Jesus had been *born of the Spirit,* if he was the miraculous Son of God, if he was — forgive such blasphemy — himself the Almighty!

The relations of Jesus to the Baptist, as related in the New Testament, reflect at every turn the dogmatic conceptions of the growing creed of Christianity. The cousinship between John and Jesus is a single instance of a mania which was not satisfied until it had affirmed a blood relationship between all the principal characters of the gospel history. What is likeliest is that the two had never seen each other till they met as master and disciple on the banks of the Jordan. So far was John from recognizing Jesus as the Messiah, that it may be doubted whether the Messianic kingdom of John's expectation involved the idea of a personal Messiah, and it is certain that Jesus himself did not at this time recognize himself as "he that should come." What is likeliest is that

Jesus sought the baptism of John out of dissatisfaction with the dominant religion of the time, and out of sympathy with one who openly proclaimed what his own heart already prophesied, — "The kingdom of heaven is at hand!" If such an act implied repentance and confession of wrong-doing, Jesus, however clean and honorable had been his life, was not so miserably self-righteous as to hesitate a moment upon this account.

That the religious consciousness of Jesus was rapidly matured under the influence of John's impassioned utterance we have every reason to believe. But this increasing maturity brought an increasing sense of difference. Even if the ministry of John had continued indefinitely it may be doubted whether Jesus would long have reckoned himself among his disciples. But the arrest of John by Herod Antipas saved him the pain of setting up a standard of his own while John's was still upon the field. With the arrest of John began the special ministry of Jesus. He was already nearly forty years of age. One glorious year of hope and high resolve, and then the shadow of doom, and then — the doom. How wonderful it is that from a period of activity so brief, and so secluded from the self-conscious world, such vast results should have proceeded!

I have read or heard somewhere of a remarkable Indian plant or tree which grows, isolated from

others, to a great height, throwing out few, if any, lateral branches, but suddenly, at the very top, bursting into a single flower of marvellous brilliancy and beauty, and with a fragrance that enchants the sense with an unspeakable delight. And then — it dies! It is a parable of the life of Jesus. Year after year it grew in silence and obscurity, sending no lateral branches, that we know of, out into the sunny Galilean air; but suddenly its top, as if dew-sprinkled with the baptism of John, as if expanded by the fierce heats of a nation's patriotic and religious zeal, burst into a flower whose beauty and whose fragrance have enriched whole centuries of time. But as we may be sure that all that patient waiting, silent growing, of the Indian tree were necessary to its one consummate flower, we may be equally sure that all the patient waiting, silent growth, of Jesus were but the needful preparation for his single year of active service among men, a flower whose fragrance, even to this day, enriches every wind that blows.

IV.

JESUS AS PROPHET.

"At first they knew him only as a village enthusiast, a Galilean teacher, at best a rabbi, like other interpreters of the Law, one of the school, perhaps, of Rabbi Hillel or Rabbi Simeon, like them setting the weightier matters of justice and mercy above the mint, anise, and cumin of current exposition. For a background to the understanding of his discourses, one should know something of the wonderful, well-meaning pedantry of the rabbinical interpreters, and something, too, of the genuine and wholesome ethics which the better sort, Hillel at their head, had tried to engraft upon it."

Joseph Henry Allen.

IV.

JESUS AS PROPHET.

THE relations of Jesus to John the Baptist are full of uncertainty, hopelessly so if we attach any importance to the representations of the Fourth Gospel. In Matthew the story of the temptation follows immediately upon the story of the baptism. It is just possible that this story contains so much of truth: that Jesus, as was customary among the prophets of his nation, retired into the wilderness to nurse the flame of his resolve and deepen his religious consecration. But such an act supposes a more special task than he had yet assumed, and a different spirit from that in which shortly afterward he entered on his proper work. The general framework of the story is purely symbolic, and appears at this stage of the narration only in accordance with the erroneous supposition that the baptism of Jesus was the beginning of his Messianic career. This was still far in the future, and the period of inward struggle, which must have preceded rather than fol-

lowed his distinct avowal of his Messiahship, is but rudely symbolized in this superstitious story, which, nevertheless, is not without a certain dignity and charm.

The baptism of Jesus by John the Baptist was the baptism of a disciple by the prophet of the kingdom of heaven. Those baptized by John, for the most part, returned after their baptism to their usual vocations; some of them to await with breathless interest the great day of Jehovah, and others to relapse into the stupor from which the trumpet-tones of the ascetic prophet had roused them for a moment. Still others, it is every way probable, tarried in the vicinity of the Jordan. They could not hear too often the Baptist's "sure word of prophecy." It sustained their wavering hearts; it deepened their religious consciousness. Among those who lingered thus with John, we may assign a place to Jesus with some confidence. The account of the relations of the two is everywhere shadow and not substance, but it is a shadow of such dimensions and such density that it implies a relation between the two more intimate and more protracted than the average relation between the Baptist and his disciples. And it may even be that Jesus was still in company with John when the arrest of the latter by Antipas brought his public career to a sudden termination. The arrest of John is attributed in the New Testa-

ment to his rebuke of Antipas for his adulterous marriage with his niece Herodias. Herodias's first husband was her uncle Herod, a son of Mariamne, whom his father, Herod the Great, had disinherited. Desiring a royal husband, she forsook her uncle Herod for her uncle Antipas, who had simultaneously wearied of his Arabian wife. It is not likely, however, that this dramatic situation, sure to attract the Evangelist, had anything to do with John's imprisonment. But Antipas felt the waves of popular enthusiasm beating against the bases of his throne; his recollection was still vivid of the insurrection of Judas the Gaulonite, and he could not be expected to distinguish between the spirit of Judas and that of John. Nor is it unlikely that the movement of John was rapidly assuming a political character. Such was the tendency of every Messianic movement.

Whatever the motive, it is certain that John was thrown into prison. His movement was not wholly extinguished by this circumstance. The movement of Jesus gathered up a considerable portion of its energy into itself, but a certain remainder long maintained a parallel existence; even into the second century, and later, when it had still energy enough to interpolate Josephus in behalf of John, as, further on, the Christians were impelled to do in behalf of Jesus.

With the imprisonment of John the Baptist be-

gins the independent ministry of Jesus. Possibly the method of John had already impressed Jesus as too harsh, and thoughts of establishing a ministry parallel to John's may have occurred to him. But he was saved the painfulness of doing this by the event of John's imprisonment. Henceforth there was an end of doubt and hesitation. If Jesus was by the Jordan at this time, he returned at once to Galilee, and there took up the herald-cry of John, — the same, but with an accent of diviner pity and more perfect trust: "The kingdom of heaven is at hand."

This was in A. D. 34,[1] and in the early spring. The entire activity of Jesus was concentrated within the limits of a single year. This is not the traditional idea which is derived from the Fourth Gospel. According to this idea, the ministry of Jesus extended over three years. The various feasts which Jesus is said to have attended at Jerusalem carry this implication. And it has been argued that certain expressions and omissions in the Synoptists suggest the longer term. But upon close inspection the one year of the Synoptists proves to be fully adequate to all the conditions of the problem, while the three years of John land us amid a host of incongruities. The Jesus of John is always appearing and vanishing, and flitting back and forth between Jerusalem and Galilee

[1] I follow the chronology of Keim as the most satisfactory.

in a vague and purposeless manner, entirely suitable to the Logos-phantom of this Gospel, but entirely at variance with the human personality of Jesus.

Considering the briefness of his activity, we have no reason to complain of the amount of our traditional information. The amount is remarkably generous, and is a decisive proof that Jesus must have made a profound impression. On no other supposition is it possible to account for so many sentences and parables that have the impress of his individuality. There is much here that Jesus never said. Invention and distortion have contributed their respective quotas of pseudo-sayings; but, when due allowance has been made for all of this, a nucleus remains of which the individuality and force and beauty cannot be impeached by any reasonable person. An unfavorable verdict here would only be the critic's condemnation.

In the career of Jesus a few important points emerge with absolute clearness, but the utmost ingenuity and conscientiousness combined are unequal to the task of determining the order of the various events and sayings of the New Testament narrations. The order observed in the New Testament is oftener misleading than instructive. Matthew is more trustworthy than Luke in general, but even Matthew's arrangement of the discourses and events is arbitrary in nine cases out of ten.

Matthew is largely made up of a series of mechanical groups. The sententious teachings are massed; the miracles are massed; the parables are massed; the conflicts are massed. This principle is everywhere apparent. "Birds of a feather flock together." Sayings that must have originated at different and even widely separated times are forced into an arbitrary juxtaposition. From the standpoint of the average Christian dogmatist, which assumes that there was no development in the ideas of Jesus, we have here an inextricable snarl; but once allow the hypothesis of a development on the part of Jesus, and that what would be a progressive series in any other life might have been the same in this, and immediately we have a general order, into which each particular event and saying cannot be set exactly, but into which certain groups and stages of idea and action fall with such positive alacrity as is of itself quite reassuring. Nor is it a mere fancy that the order thus conceived derives some further validity from the fact that it tallies with the procession of the seasons and the flowers and fruits throughout the year of Jesus' ministry. In such vital relations was the mind of Jesus with the spectacle of nature, and the homely tasks of husbandmen and vintners, that his words continually took color from this spectacle, reflected its various changes and the corresponding changes in

the labors of his countrymen in town and field. This is a pleasant thought, and it has a basis of reality.

Nothing could be simpler than the outlines of Jesus' ministry as revealed in the Synoptic Gospels. It was a Galilean idyl of some months' duration, overclouded more and more by conflicts with the ecclesiastical powers, developing in Jesus an ever-growing sense of the importance of his mission and his Messianic office. To the idyl a tragedy succeeded, for whose enactment only a few weeks were necessary. This tragedy will be the subject of my next discourse. My concern this morning is wholly with the Galilean idyl, with the period of eager hope and joyful expectation, involved in an inevitable conflict more and more, but tending to an ever higher exaltation, a self-assertion ever more courageous and profound.

It is the idea of Renan that the ministry of Jesus began in private circles and gradually widened. This was the method of Mohammed, without any doubt; but not without forcing the note can it be made to appear that the initiative of Jesus was of this sort. From the moment of John's death Jesus must have been something more than a dealer in maxims, however lofty, unrelated to a great leading idea. He speaks of himself and he is often spoken of as a scribe or rabbi, and there

was this aspect to his life throughout the Galilean period. The teacher in him was a much more important factor than in John the Baptist, to whom nothing of the manner of the scribe or rabbi pertained. Nevertheless this factor was in such complete subordination to another and a higher, that in his total manifestation, equally with John the Baptist, he was *a prophet*, different from and yet of the same order with the ancient prophets of Israel. More of a scribe and rabbi than John, he was not less a prophet; and it was as a prophet that he entered on his independent ministry. It was not as the Messiah whom John had heralded (if he had heralded any personal Messiah); it was as another herald-prophet of the kingdom of God. The idea that he was himself the central figure of this kingdom was not a part of his original outfit. He assumed the rôle of John. His watchword was the same, — "The kingdom of heaven is at hand," — and when he sent out his disciples this was the message which he charged them to deliver. Nothing was more central to the Messianic thought than the idea that with the appearance of the Messiah the kingdom of heaven was established not only *de jure* but *de facto*, — not only in prospect but in fact. So that for Jesus, regarding himself as the Messiah, to keep on insisting, and bidding others insist, "The kingdom of heaven is approaching," would have been the disavowal of his claim.

"The kingdom of heaven is at hand!" This term, "the kingdom of heaven," was identical with "the kingdom of God," — the word "heaven" being often used, instead of "God," as a synonym for "the ineffable name." The word "heaven" here had nothing to do with any place or state of existence after death. The kingdom of heaven was simply and purely the "good time coming," of which prophets long ago had prophesied, but which, in the time of Jesus, was the one great, persistent, omnipresent, all-engrossing object of thought throughout the length and breadth of Palestine. This is no exaggeration, for Samaria, no less than Galilee and Judea, was agitated by this thought. But this thought, it must never be forgotten, was never fixed and definite. It varied with every variation of the national life and with the character of every individual prophet. The more spiritual the prophet, the more spiritual his conception of the kingdom, and *vice versâ*. In general, peace, prosperity, and righteousness were regarded as the component parts of the "good time coming." The grosser minds insisted most upon the prosperity, the absence of foreign oppression, the heel of Israel upon the necks of the oppressors. The more spiritual insisted most upon the righteousness. But even where righteousness was uppermost it was generally associated with the idea of prosperity. It was so in the thought of John. It was so in the thought

of Jesus. Their idea was precisely that of the ancient prophets, that national righteousness would be the signal for the heavenly kingdom to appear; but when it did appear, they did not doubt that it would usher in an era of unexampled peace and prosperity. "Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness," said Jesus, "and all these things shall be added unto you." In the minds of many in the time of Jesus, the Messianic time meant little more than the deliverance of Palestine from the hated power of Rome. The Maccabean dynasty furnished the elements of their ideal. Some even stooped so low as to see the Messiah in Herod the Great. John and Jesus were as far as possible from these materialistic fancies. With them the outward deliverance and prosperity were incidents of the reign of righteousness. If this was a means to an end, the means was greater than the end it had in view.

"The kingdom of heaven is at hand!" The watchword of Jesus was the same as that of John. His object was the same: to, as it were, force the hand of fate by turning everywhere the hearts of men to righteousness; but with this fundamental likeness between John and Jesus, there was an important difference, a difference necessitated by the difference in their characters. With John the Baptist, conscience, with Jesus of Nazareth, affection, was supreme. In John we see only the hatred

of iniquity; in Jesus we see, I will not say *only* the love of men, but this preëminently and always. Hence a different method, especially in the earlier part of Jesus' ministry. His tone is not so fierce as John's, not so denunciatory. He seeks to draw men into the kingdom, where John would drive them with the lash of his intolerable invective. You will, at once, recall sentences ascribed to Jesus that are as drastic as any ascribed to John. And they are undoubtedly authentic. But they belong to a later stage of his ministry. They were wrung from him by the opposition of his enemies. His boundless faith in human nature had suffered from his practical experience. The initiative of Jesus was full of hope and cheer. So enamored was he of his own idea, that he imagined it would have a universal fascination.

But the difference between John and Jesus has not half been told. You have heard the saying, "If God made man in his own image, man has well paid him back." Here was a case in point. John was a man of almost savage sternness. The God of his imagination was a reflection of himself, as harsh and stern as the god of any ancient prophet, Amos or Hosea. Upon the other hand, the boundless love of Jesus was reproduced in his idea of God as the universal Father of mankind. His God-idea was almost as different as possible from that of John; and I do not think we shall

account for it by seeking here and there in Hebrew or in Greek and Roman writers for a similar idea. It will certainly be found there; but of Greek and Roman writers Jesus knew absolutely nothing, and the idea of God as a Father was too little emphasized in the Hebrew Scriptures to make much impression on his mind. I am obliged to think that in the fatherly tenderness of the God of Jesus we have simply a reflection of the tenderness of his own heart. He was not a student. He was not a reasoner. With him, feeling was all in all. He was no such egotist as to suppose that his own love could outstrip the love of Heaven. Less from observation of the fact than because the sunshine of his own affection fell equally upon the evil and the good, the rain of his own pitying tears equally upon the just and unjust, he made bold to predicate these attributes of the Eternal. Because the publicans and harlots were dearer in his eyes than the most righteous in the community, he ascribed this preference to God. To the woman taken in adultery he could say, "Thy sins are forgiven thee," because of his swift inference, an inference the validity of which he never doubted, that God could not be less forgiving than himself. So everywhere the God of Jesus reflects his own immeasurable tenderness. In this sense, indeed, he might have said in the phrase of the Fourth Gospel, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." But he never

could or would have said this, for he was not himself aware that his idea of the Father was the reflex image of his own "enthusiasm for humanity."

This enthusiasm manifested itself in the designation of himself, which was apparently anterior to his assumption of Messiahship, — "the Son of Man." Never once in the Synoptic Gospels does he call himself "the Son of God;" but the expression "Son of Man" is ever on his lips, as one that sums up, in a perfect manner, the elements of his self-consciousness. Why was this so? The answer generally is, Because in Daniel the Messiah is spoken of as one "whose form is as the Son of Man," so that when Jesus called himself the Son of Man he simply meant to call himself the Messiah. The criticism of Kuenen is convincing to my mind that there is no personal Messiah in Daniel, that the "one whose form is as the Son of Man" is the Jewish nation. But it may be granted that the expression was applied to the Messiah in the time of Jesus. Did Jesus use it in this way? Not originally, if he asked the question, "Whom do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?" for then it could only mean, "Do men say that I, the Messiah, am the Messiah?" Later it may be that Jesus accepted the Messianic force of these words and applied them to his second coming "in the clouds of heaven;" but the expression "Son of Man" is used in the Old Testament, outside of Dan-

iel, without any Messianic meaning, and oftenest to express the idea of man, limited and imperfect, bearing the burdens that are incidental to his mortal lot. On this account, I doubt not, Jesus made it synonymous with his own name. It identified him with humanity; it expressed the desire of his heart to be thoroughly human. Christendom has wasted an incalculable amount of energy in the endeavor to exhibit Jesus as "the Son of God," and even as God himself. For commentary on this we have the record that the only anxiety of Jesus was to be, and to be considered, absolutely human; and to this end he called himself "the Son of Man."

His love of man spoke in this phrase, as in his designation of God as Abba, Father; and his love of man is the one sentiment which breathes from every page of the New Testament tradition; nor this in any vague, far-off, and abstract way, but in the most concrete way imaginable. It was not the ideal man, — the possible man, — that he loved, but the men and women of Palestine, the most abased of them as much — more than the most respectable. The oratorio of "The Messiah" has long been written; its music glorious; its text an irrational conglomeration of all the absurdities of Biblical interpretation that have attached themselves to the theological Christ. The symphony of the Messiah has yet to be written. It awaits

the master-hand which shall combine the tenderness of Beethoven, at his tenderest, with the tumultuous energy of Wagner in his stormiest mood. And when it is written, the unifying theme which will underlie every movement, from the joyous opening to the dark and stormy close, will be a theme which will express, as well as music can, a love of man, whose tenderness and passion were incalculably pure and high. For such a love it was that underlay the life of Jesus from its beginning to its end, and gathered up into itself all of its joy and sorrow, all of its seeming discords, fusing them into harmonious unity.

The localities of Jesus' teaching are but vaguely hinted at in the New Testament tradition. He began his work, it would appear, in Capernaum, a thriving town upon the Sea of Galilee, well to the north. Luke's representation that he began at Nazareth is without any internal or general consistency. From Capernaum he sallied out into the various towns and villages which in his day dotted the smiling, verdurous, and fruitful plain of Gennesareth. Dreams of the kingdom of God came naturally in such a place as that, a marvel in its loveliness. The ministry of Jesus was never so widely extended as we should gather from the general expressions that follow up the various particular accounts of his preaching. These are the school-boy's "and so forth" with which he seeks

to round out his imperfect lesson. The immediate vicinity of Lake Gennesareth would seem to have engrossed the bulk of his activity, and Capernaum to have been his favorite sallying point and resting place. That occasionally his journeys were extended beyond the fishing villages of Gennesareth and the towns of the adjacent plain, to Nazareth and its vicinity, across the lake, and northward to the extreme boundary of Galilee, even, perhaps, across it into heathen Phenicia, there can be no serious doubt; nor can there be any that the synagogues were his favorite places of public utterance, nor that in them, at first, his word was frequently welcomed and approved. Further on, as his opposition to the ecclesiastical powers became more pronounced, the synagogues were superseded by other places, such as convenience might offer. And quite from the beginning the synagogue was not his only place of teaching. Hillside and plain he made his vantage-grounds; they lent him birds and flowers to illustrate his words; the fisherman's boat became his pulpit; and as he walked from one village to another he talked with his disciples, or as he reclined with them at table after the fatigues of the day. Then the stream of his discourse was never dry. It was an easy, careless, joyous life he led, — that of the initial weeks and months of his ministry. His heart was overflowing with the sense of the eternal goodness and the nearness of the Day

of the Lord. Men and women gave him freely of their hearts' best love, and his little world of pure affection and of kindly service seemed to him a pledge and illustration of the universal rejuvenation, whose prophecy was in his heart. If we can trust the record at this point, — and it is as trustworthy here as anywhere, — the faith of Jesus in the Fatherly Providence was so complete that he dissuaded men from all anxiety in regard to what they should eat or drink or wear. The nature of his perspective, however, must be taken into the account. The kingdom of heaven was at hand, and a prominent feature of this kingdom was the uncoaxed abundance of the earth. Jesus was not a political economist. He was not a captain of labor. The dignity of labor, the morality of industrial enterprise, — these things had no place in his conception of the world. The poor attracted him much more than the rich; their vices seemed to him less dangerous. Injustice, cruelty, and oppression were more hateful to him than vices of passion and improvidence. A lover of little children and the home, with an immense capacity for loving and for being loved, he nevertheless advised a celibate life for those whose passions could endure so much restraint,— this, too, I am obliged to think, in view of the impending catastrophe which was to entirely revolutionize the existing order of society.

The fallacy of his industrial ideas was obscured

for Jesus, it would seem, by the ability and generosity of his earliest disciples. Two pairs of fishermen-brothers, Peter and Andrew, James and John, appear to have been well-to-do persons, and to have devoted themselves entirely to him. Of these four disciples, Peter and James and John seem to have been the most confidential friends of Jesus, and in this order, the representation of John as "*the* beloved disciple" being entirely absent from the Synoptics. Of "The Twelve" whom he selected as his habitual companions, these are in the foreground always. Of the others, except Judas of Kerioth, little is said or known. The apostle Matthew is identified with Matthew, the publican-disciple in the First Gospel, who is called Levi in Mark and Luke, where there is not a hint that he was the same as Matthew. If he was not, then many a shrewd discovery of the publican character in the First Gospel must go the way of others of its kind, equally shrewd and wholly fanciful.

Criticism has sometimes gone so far as to deny that the twelve were ever called apostles in the lifetime of Jesus, or that he ever sent them forth; but for the second of these statements there is sufficient proof. Luke represents him as sending out seventy after the twelve. The dogmatic animus is here apparent. As the twelve stand for the twelve tribes of Israel, so the seventy stand for the

seventy nations of the world, as counted or imagined at that time. Luke, as the less Jewish Gospel, is not satisfied with a Jewish apostolate. The seventy are a dogmatic invention. Even the sending out of the twelve would seem to have been an experiment which a few weeks', or even a few days' trial proved to be hopeless. With the exception of this brief period of absence, the twelve were the companions of Jesus upon his journeys. There is abundant evidence that they entered very imperfectly into his thought. Their conception of the kingdom of heaven was material and gross. They disputed among themselves who should have precedence in its princely arrangements. Nothing would satisfy the mother of James and John but that her sons should sit one on the right hand and the other on the left of the Messiah in his kingdom. This mention of Salome reminds us that several women, of whom she was one, accompanied Jesus and the twelve wherever they went. Mary of Magdala, and another Mary, occupied the foremost place in his regard. The devotion of these women to the fortunes of Jesus was without any sentimental implication. Renan has broached a different opinion; but always in Judea the religious teacher that demanded the most renunciation attracted women to his side. So the Pharisees had many devotees among the women. It was natural that Jesus should enjoy the same distinction.

The insatiable curiosity of the Galileans, and their easy hospitality, came to the aid of Jesus and his little company of travelling companions. Lodging and sustenance were gladly furnished them in almost every town and village of their missionary field. In course of time this included Nazareth, the birthplace of Jesus, where he had lived for many years; but men and women who had known him, from his childhood up, were slow to recognize the prophet of the kingdom, much less the Messiah, in one who had mended their cradles for them, and built their cribs and stalls. His mother and his brothers were as slow as any of the rest to take him at his own valuation, if indeed they did not lead the opposition to his claims. They even followed him to Capernaum, and endeavored to dissuade him from the task he had assumed. I need not say how ill these facts accord with any fancy of his miraculous birth. We do not entertain the possibility of any such occurrence.

The sum of Jesus' teaching during the Galilean period was exhausted by his endeavors to set forth the manner of life which men should lead who expected to be citizens of the kingdom of heaven. In form, his teaching was not strikingly original. Aphorism and paradox were favorite methods with the rabbinism of the time, and the parable was not so entirely strange to it as Renan has affirmed. To the paradox, Jesus was extremely partial. Some of

his weightiest utterances are cast in this mould, — the assertion as a fact of that which seems a contradiction, as: "To him that hath shall be given, and from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath;" "He that saveth his life shall lose it, and he that loseth his life shall save it." He was fond, too, of convicting men out of their own mouths; of asking them questions of which the inevitable answer was the confirmation of his principles. Thomas Fuller says of the good woman, "She makes plain cloth to be velvet by her handsome wearing of it;" so Jesus made the parable, which up to his time had been only moderately efficient, an instrument, a weapon with which he accomplished wonders. His parables must ever seem to us the most characteristic part of his teaching. Their charm is largely in their homeliness. They are the utterances of a man who could not be indifferent to any aspect of the busy life that was going on about him, even though he believed that a new order was impending. We must be on our guard against the illusive notion that the aphorisms and parables of Jesus were poured forth in any such numbers at a time as the Gospels, especially the first, would indicate. The method of the First Gospel, as I have said, is to mass things of like character, — parables, sentences, miracles, and so on. What is most likely is that the parables were delivered one at a time, and the

sentences in no such torrent as the "Sermon on the Mount," which is evidently made up of all the richest sentences of Jesus during the Galilean period. As to the substance of these teachings, as well as to their form, we must take warning. The Gospels assumed their present form throughout a period when various controversies were agitating the bosom of the infant church. These controversies have left their mark upon the Gospels. Especially the Judaizing tendency of the infant church has done so. To take a single example: the man thrust out because he had not worn a wedding garment. The wedding garment here is evidently the ceremonial righteousness without which, in opposition to Paul, the Jewish Christians insisted that no heathen could come in. This is but one instance, out of a score that might be easily named, where certainly the words attributed to Jesus never came from him.

Seeking to penetrate to what was most essential in the teachings of Jesus and in his general attitude, we shall do best to consider separately his relations to the different parties and divisions that made up his political and social and religious world. Beginning at the periphery, the heathen world first offers itself for our consideration. It is not to be doubted that Jesus felt the sense of outrage common to all his people, in view of the oppressive tyranny of Rome; but he was with the

Pharisees against the Zealots in his conviction that this tyranny must wait for God to give the sign of its abolishment. The Zealots, the patriots of the patriots, wished to hasten somewhat the steps of the Almighty by an energetic resistance of their own. The Pharisees urged that with the advent of the Messiah, or the Messianic kingdom, the Roman power would shrivel into naught. This was the idea of Jesus. The insurrection of Judas the Gaulonite was fresh in his memory. He had no inclination to follow in his steps. Between him and the Zealots, then, there could have been little sympathy. Simon the Zealot was one of the twelve, but his conquests in this direction must have been few.

But while in this particular Jesus was in agreement with the Pharisees, his general attitude to the heathen world was entirely foreign to their principles. The structure of the Galilean world assisted him to wider sympathies than were current in Jerusalem. Galilee, or the northern part of it, was called contemptuously by the Judeans "Galilee of the Gentiles." In Capernaum and elsewhere Jesus must frequently have come in contact with a heathen population, and, as a man looking through his own eyes, he must have found the heathen frequently in more perfect accord with his moral ideal than the self-righteous Pharisees. Nevertheless, the attitude of Jesus, with reference

to both heathens and Samaritans, is one of the most perplexing problems of New Testament criticism. The sayings, on this head, attributed to him abound in contradictions. The net result, when we have made allowance for the distortion of the Petro-Pauline controversy, and for a natural development of thought, is that, as time went on, Jesus grew more and more sympathetic towards the heathen and Samaritans, and finally imagined that the former would enjoy the benefits of the approaching kingdom to a fuller extent than his own countrymen.

The relation of Jesus to "the unchurched," as we might call them, of his day, the common people, the outcasts of the temple and the synagogue, is central to his character and his career. It is the key of his position. These were "the lost sheep of the house of Israel." The Pharisees did not consider them worth seeking or saving. They dreaded contact with them as a stain upon their ceremonial cleanness. Now it was to this class that Jesus addressed himself with special earnestness; and his opposition to the Pharisees culminated in the most damaging assertion that his lips could frame or his imagination could conceive, when he hurled this saying in their teeth: "The publicans and harlots shall go into the kingdom of heaven before you." This joining together of the terms "publicans" and "harlots" indicates that the two classes were gen-

erally regarded as the lowest in the community, and, by consequence, that they had an attraction for each other. The relations of Jesus with these classes indicate the extent of his rebellion against the orthodoxy of his time. The publicans were equally despised and hated by both Zealots and Pharisees. Even their money was not good for charity, — a point to which our modern orthodoxy has not yet attained. But Jesus mingled freely with this class, found disciples if not an apostle among them, and upbraided the Pharisees for not following their example in seeking the baptism of John.

The relation of Jesus to the Pharisaic party has been incidentally set forth already in declaring his relation to the Zealots, to the heathen, and Samaritans, and finally to the pariahs of the community; but this relation must be more carefully developed. There can be no doubt that an idea of the Pharisees derived from the New Testament alone would be exceedingly unjust. There were Pharisees and Pharisees. The self-righteousness of some was rebuked by others of their class. The maxims of Jesus, which score their faults most deeply, can be paralleled by maxims of their own. So, too, can many of his higher maxims of sincerity and the religion of the heart. And Jesus was not unaware of this. The end of his work has obscured for us the beginning, but, taking the record as it stands,

it is evident that his distrust of the Pharisees was a thing of gradual development. At first he mingled with them freely, and expected them to give him sympathy and aid. His disciples must have been recruited to a considerable extent from their ranks. He distinguished them as "the righteous" from "the sinners" for whom he had compassion. Even his words, "Unless your righteousness exceed that of the scribes and Pharisees ye shall in no wise enter the kingdom," imply that their righteousness was indisputable and the best then current. In what respect did he regard their righteousness as defective? In this: that it was too exclusively a matter of outward forms and ceremonies, too little a matter of the heart. This was what Matthew Arnold calls "the secret of Jesus," — his perception that it is character which gives to conduct its abiding grace and glory. Individual Pharisees had seen so much. Their maxims, those of Hillel and others, had perhaps reached the ear of Jesus; but his concern was with the average Pharisaism of his time, and this was wholly engrossed with ceremonial considerations; not only with conduct rather than with character, but with ceremonial rather than with social conduct. Men excused themselves from supporting their aged parents on the plea that their money was pledged to the treasury of the temple. The central idea of Jesus was that, while social was more important than ceremonial

conduct, the most important thing of all was the inward disposition. To be free of murderous and licentious acts was not enough. One must be free from cruel thoughts and from impure desires. Here bursts the thought of Jesus into its perfect flower.

With such an estimate of the relative values of ceremonial and inward purity, it was inevitable that Jesus should grow more and more indifferent to those things which in the view of the Pharisees were of the first importance. At first, we may conceive, he was disposed to let the ceremonial righteousness remain intact, and try to infuse into it a principle of inward life. His sayings, on this head, have certainly been garbled by the Judaizing Christians of a later time, but so much is still apparent. It was, however, impossible for him to maintain this attitude for any length of time. Ceremonial piety endures "no brother near the throne," and much less a subordinate position; but, with Pharisaic insistence on the importance of Levitical purity and Sabbatical observance, Jesus grew more contemptuous of these things, and more antagonistic in his sentiments. If he did not make occasions for offence, he neglected none that offered. He neglected the Levitical washings, and did not exact them of his disciples. He caressed with loving hands the outcasts of the temple and the synagogue. He sat at meat with publicans. He allowed "a

woman that was a sinner" to bathe his feet and wipe them with her hair. He went through the cornfields on the Sabbath with his disciples, and bade them pluck the corn and eat it. "Eat that which is set before you," he said to his disciples, with shocking disregard of any consideration of Levitical cleanness; and again he said, in fundamental hostility to the Pharisaic casuistry, "Not that which goeth into a man defileth him;" a splendidly audacious saying in its day, which was not literally true, and is not so in ours.

The genius of Jesus was not intellectual but moral. He did not speculate. He was no theologian. The Church has its "Apostles' Creed." It has never pretended to have a creed of Jesus. Not one of the arid propositions of its various creeds can claim his sanction. He never uttered anything that can be called a theological proposition. Nevertheless, a certain theology is implied in his teachings; and this was the theology of his time, above the limitations of which his intellectual conceptions never rose. Indeed, upon the side of science there was something possible, even at that time in the world, to which he did not attain. He made the superstitions of his time the vehicles of his moral earnestness. He believed in angels and devils, in a prince of devils, in demoniacal possession, in the resurrection of the body, in a material Gehenna, in special providence, and so on. Some of

these beliefs were sources of strength to him, while others were sources of weakness. Especially was his belief in a hierarchy of devils greatly to his advantage. It enabled him to cope with the phenomena of nervous disease, called demoniacal possession, as he could not otherwise have done. For the success of his exorcism, it was necessary for him to believe in the reality of the possession, and in himself as the herald or Messiah of a kingdom diametrically opposed to that of Satan. In all his dealings with the so-called demoniacs we see him consciously measuring his power with Satan, as Ormuzd against Ahriman in the Persian theology. Such dealings, therefore, had for him a religious significance; but he did well to recognize that the faith of the sufferer was the efficient cause of his recovery, — faith in his power over the world of devils; for "it was the superstition itself which formed the generative cause of the disease," so that with the conviction that the power of Jesus was superior to that of Satan, the disease was immediately abated, if not cured. But what convinced the demoniacs of the superiority of Jesus was the strength of his own personal conviction. His voice and manner were their surety for this.

The instances of successful dealing with the demoniacs were certainly not numerous, but they were multiplied and magnified by the popular imagination and report; they changed, upon their

travels, into cures of lepers and the dumb and blind, and, thus exaggerated, served, in no small degree, to increase the popular interest in Jesus, and to swell the crowd of his disciples. In the autumn months of A. D. 34, we may conceive of Jesus as being widely famed, though not so widely known, in Galilee; as attracting wherever he went an eager concourse of people; as being almost worshipped by an inner circle of believers; as attracting to himself many of the more spiritual scribes and Pharisees, and especially as endearing himself, in an unprecedented manner, to the most despised and miserable in the community. Never had the kingdom of heaven seemed so near to any of its prophets as then it seemed to him. His spiritual eye "saw Satan, like lightning, fall from heaven," — the power of evil suddenly and irrecoverably beaten down and utterly destroyed. The idyl of Galilee culminated in this ecstasy of eager hope and joyful expectation. Of course he was mistaken in his calculations, and was doomed to disappointment; but the mistake of believing too much in man, and too much in the power of one's own consecration, is a sublime mistake. If only enough could be induced to make it (to be as paradoxical as Jesus), it would be a mistake no longer, but God's kingdom would come and his will would be done upon the earth as in the heaven of the ideal.

It was not long before the necessities of Jesus' situation brought him to the beginning of the end. His heedlessness of ceremonial purity, his subordination of Sabbatical observance to the claims of common-sense morality and kindliness, his association with the outcasts of the synagogue and temple, — these things, and such as these, brought him into ever sharper contrast with the Pharisaic party, whose hot protagonists began to dog his steps and seek to involve him in controversies which they knew would damage him with the ecclesiastical authorities. Their pertinacity sharpened the edge of his invective. The more they menaced him, the more defiantly he answered them. But there were times when he was weary of the controversy, now each day renewed, and again and again he took himself off into some quiet place, where he could be alone with his disciples, and meditate upon his future course. News came to him that John the Baptist had been put to death in prison, and the fate of his great teacher seemed almost a premonition of his own. Was ever such an azure heaven overspread so soon with dark and threatening clouds? News came to him that Herod Antipas was intending to follow up the destruction of John the Baptist with his own. The lips that uttered the beatitudes had learned to enunciate a different language. "Go tell that fox," he said, "that I have yet some time to stay in Galilee before I go up to

Jerusalem." Already, then, the consciousness that he must go up there and face the hierarchy in the stronghold of its bigotry and zeal had dawned upon his mind. His fame had already gone so far. The more the pity! For back over the course which it had travelled came certain Pharisees from Jerusalem, apparently sent out to spy into his teachings and entrap him into dangerous admissions. They succeeded perfectly. From henceforth it was war to the knife. As if to gather up his energies for the encounter, Jesus betook himself beyond the borders of Galilee, into the vicinity of Tyre and Sidon. Returning to the lake-shore, he found his enemies awaiting him with a new stratagem. They wanted a sign from heaven. Was not their wanting it itself a sign that his cures of the possessed were too near akin to the cures of their own exorcists to pass with them for genuine miracles? But these were all he had to offer; and he did not offer these. If miracle had played the part in the economy of Jesus which modern orthodoxy claims, there would have been no excuse for his not performing such a miracle as would have silenced every demur at his prophetic office. What he did was to blast the Pharisees, and, with them, the peddlers in Christian evidences from that day to this, with the assertion, "A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign, but there shall no sign be given them."

Once more he drew apart into a region remote from the scenes of his ordinary activity. His journey brought him into the neighborhood of Cæsarea-Philippi, the handsome city which Philip Antipas had built as a compliment to the Roman emperor. It was a purely pagan city in its architecture and the manner of its life; but though Jesus had wandered among its theatres and palaces he would have had no eyes to see the glittering spectacle. His eyes were turned inward upon his heart; and what he read there was that *he was the Messiah, and that as the Messiah he must go up to Jerusalem.*

The struggle and the disappointment had not had the effect which would have followed on them in a less exalted mind. Instead of convincing Jesus that he was something less than the herald of the kingdom, they had convinced him that he was something more, and that he must assume the rôle which had been assigned to him by his self-consciousness. He could not help admitting that his Galilean ministry had ended in something which was more like failure than success. Its joyous initiative had not been followed up by a succession of victories. Had he then dared too much? Nay, not enough. Now he would dare all. He had too long denied the pleading of his heart. Why had he not believed that still small voice which had so often told him that he was the Christ? For it is not conceivable that his Messianic self-conscious-

ness was any sudden apparition. Very gradually it must have dawned upon his mind. He called his disciples about him and asked them, "Whom do men say that I am?" They told him, Some said this, and some said that. "But whom do *you* say that I am?" he questioned eagerly. "Thou art the Messiah," said Peter. "Blessed art thou, Simon," he exclaimed, "for flesh and blood have not revealed it unto thee, but my Father who is in heaven;" but even then he charged his disciples that for the present they should tell no man that he was the Messiah.

It was inevitable that Jesus should soon or late arrive at this conviction. Accepting the idea of a personal Messiah as the inaugurator of the kingdom of heaven, his sense of the nearness of that kingdom, and the complete coincidence of his own spiritual ideal with his ideal conception of the Messiah, compelled him to identify himself with him. A book has recently been written on the Manliness of Jesus. This was its supreme example: to measure his qualification for the Messianic office not by the standards of Zealots or Herodians, Pharisees or Sadducees, but by his own personal ideal.

For it was not as if the assumption of the Messianic office portended to his fancy any pleasurable experience, any victorious career, any magnificent sway. It was a Messiah who should "suffer many

things" that he conceived himself to be. Simultaneously with the conviction that he was the Messiah, was borne in upon him the conviction that he must go up to Jerusalem, not to triumph, but — to die. It was with this understanding that he accepted at once his office and his doom; but to measure the heroism implied in such an act, we must clear our minds of every least survival of the superstition that Jesus was anything more or less than a purely human person. We have recently been told that to appreciate the sufferings of Jesus we must apprehend him *as a suffering God.* What an absurdity is this! Who could not suffer anything with the resources of an infinite nature to fall back upon? The glory of Jesus is that *as a man,* and so considering himself — for being the Messiah did not unman him — he went to meet a miserable doom with an unquestioning submission to the logic of events.

When a gulf opened in the heart of Rome, so runs the tale, the oracle declared that the most precious thing in Rome must be thrown into it ere it would close; and men brought their gold, and women their jewels, and threw them into the gulf, and still it did not close. Then came a young man and leaped into the chasm, and it closed and opened not again. His perfect manhood was the most precious thing in Rome.

Into the gulf which yawned in the heart of his

nation, between the actual and the ideal, Jesus of Nazareth threw himself with noble scorn of death. His manhood was the most precious thing in Palestine. And if the chasm did not close above him, if the ideal still shamed the actual, and does unto this day, his courage was not less than if the edges of the gulf had kissed above his grave, nor any less should be our gratefulness.

V.

JESUS AS MESSIAH.

"THE first thing we have to do, then, is to take the record of the facts, if we can, absolutely without the warp of any preconceived opinion, or any theological dogmatism. Looking at them so, it appears plain that what we call the Messianic consciousness of Jesus, which is so intense and even predominant towards the close of his ministry, was a comparatively late development in him. To put it in theological phrase, his generation as son of God was anterior to his appointment as Messiah of the Jews. In the language we usually apply to human experience, his vocation as a moral and spiritual teacher was recognized first; and only as an after-result came his strong conviction that he was the chosen deliverer of his people, though by a way they could not understand or follow."

JOSEPH HENRY ALLEN.

V.

JESUS AS MESSIAH.

I HAVE said that simultaneously with his arrival at the conviction that he was himself the Messiah, Jesus arrived at the conviction that he must "suffer many things," and die a miserable death in furtherance of his Messianic mission. We may be very sure, however, that as his anticipations and predictions of his impending fate stand written in the New Testament, they enter into particulars much more than he did; they foreshadow the actual course of events to an extent which must have been for him impossible. It was inevitable that the events and the ideas of a period subsequent to the life of Jesus, during which the New Testament writings were gradually assuming their present form, should leave their impress upon the traditions of his speech and action. One result of this reflex influence is that even in the Synoptic Gospels, as they stand, the anticipations of a tragical conclusion of his ministry are put into the mouth of Jesus much too

soon. In John we meet them on the very threshold of the narration. Another result of this reflex influence is that the resurrection of Jesus is made a part of his anticipation of coming events. Those who accept his resurrection as a fact will find no difficulty in believing that he frequently spoke of it as a coming event. A coming event of such stupendous magnitude might well have cast its shadow before; but, for those of us who do not accept the resurrection of Jesus as a fact, the numerous allusions to it attributed to him by the Synoptists are still easily explicable on the ground that the belief in Jesus' resurrection was an undoubted fact during the tradition-forming and gospel-making period, and that this belief must have been ascribed to Jesus; his knowledge of it must have been assumed, and the most innocent sayings on his part must have been unwittingly distorted into the service of his assumed prevision. Thus, for example, "the sign of the prophet Jonah," which Jesus insists is the only sign that he will give, is made by the Synoptist to mean that Jonah's concealment for three days in the whale's belly was a sign of Jesus' three days' concealment in the grave. In fact, as the connection plainly shows, "the sign of the prophet Jonah," as Jesus understood it, was merely his preaching to the Gentiles, which Jesus regarded as a sign or omen of his own resort to such a line of action. As here,

so elsewhere, and in many instances, the belief of after-times distorted the meaning of Jesus, and even made him the mouth-piece of words which he could not have uttered. It is still possible, however, that Jesus anticipated some of the particulars of his death, such as his condemnation by the Sanhedrin, and his crucifixion by the Roman government, seeing that this was the natural order of events. Falling foul of the ecclesiastical powers of Jerusalem, he knew the doctors of the Sanhedrin would be his judges. He knew they would condemn him, and that if they could carry out their own sentence he would be stoned to death; but the Sanhedrin could not execute its own sentence under the Roman rule. This had its own favorite form of punishment. It was crucifixion. That Jesus should have known so much is not impossible, scarcely improbable, and so he may have spoken of his condemnation by the Sanhedrin, and of his death upon the cross.

That Jesus should come at length to think of himself as the Messiah was not so strange as the simultaneous conclusion that he must be a suffering Messiah, for the Messianic idea was so omnipresent to the Jewish mind that for a man conscious of a great mission not to connect his mission in some way with that idea, was quite impossible. It was the grandeur of his spiritual ideal that compelled Jesus to identify his mission with

the Messianic office. He remained the herald of the kingdom so long as he could consistently do so. The Messiah must be the incarnation of the highest possible ideal. To himself Jesus was this. This wonderful self-confidence on the part of Jesus did not necessitate self-righteousness, only an absolute devotion to the moral welfare of mankind. — only an absolute conviction that righteousness and love were fundamental facts in the new order. It was as representative of these that he demanded personal allegiance; but the conclusion that, as the Messiah, he must "suffer many things," — this was so foreign to all ordinary conceptions of the Messiah current in his time, that its adoption by the self-consciousness of Jesus is, at first glance, a great enigma. The ordinary conception of the Messiah in the time of Jesus was as a powerful and triumphant king, who should subdue the oppressors of the Jewish people, and conquer for himself a universal dominion. If such a vision of his personal future ever beguiled the heart of Jesus, we may be sure that it was not for long. But associated with the kingly idea of the Messiah was the prophetic. Here was the point at which the personal ideal of Jesus married with the popular conception, and begot his personal consciousness of himself as the Messiah. Now, in the [illegible] part of Isaiah (chapters xl. to lxvi.), now to have been written by some

prophet of the captivity, about 536 B. C., but which Jesus, like all his contemporaries, ascribed to the true Isaiah of the eighth century, — in this wonderful fragment, the cap-sheaf of Old Testament prophecy, there figures prominently "the servant of God," who is represented as a teacher or prophet; thus: "Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth. I have put my Spirit upon him: he shall declare judgment to the Gentiles. He shall not strive nor cry. He shall declare judgment with truth. He shall not fail nor be discouraged till he set judgment in the earth: far lands wait for his law." We may be sure, I think, that so far as the Messianic self-consciousness of Jesus nourished itself upon Scriptural food, it found it in these and other similar passages of the Deutero-Isaiah. Jesus was here less critical than the rabbis of his time, for they understood the "servant of God" in these passages to mean the Jewish people, or the body of faithful Jews, and modern criticism has almost unanimously corroborated their opinion. Now, in the fifty-third chapter of this same fragment, the Servant of Jehovah is represented as debased and suffering, while at the same time his ultimate triumph is portended. "He was despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief." In the oratorio of "The Messiah," the tenderest passage in the music is that which corresponds to these words.

This is as it should be, for we may well believe that no other passage in the Old Testament was so central to the thought of Jesus. I do not mean that his anticipation of a catastrophic ending to his ministry was entirely derived from this text and its context. His observation of the spirit of the Pharisees, as he saw them in Galilee, led him to expect the worst when he should meet them in Jerusalem, as he meant to meet them, with a gesture of defiance; but what was predicated in the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah of the Servant of Jehovah, tallied almost exactly with his natural anticipation. "Surely," the prophet says, "he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows; yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities. He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who of his generation regarded it, why he was cut off out of the land of the living? and he made his grave with the wicked, and with sinners in his death; although he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth, yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief." The contemporaries of Jesus did not apply these words to the Messiah, but Jesus did, and therefore to himself. Even before the announcement of his Messiahship at Cæsarea-Philippi, he must often have brooded over them. The future which they

pictured for him was very different from that which his own hopeful and loving heart had pictured at the beginning of his ministry only ten months ago; but there had been no break in the development of his ideas. Now the conviction of impending shame and death would haunt him more and more. Meantime the idea of a suffering Messiah would shock the Zealots and the Pharisees, and excite their animosity. Nor was it strange that it should do so. For one man to set up his idea of the Messiah in opposition to the entire community, an idea diametrically opposed to the popular idea, was certainly audacious, and could hardly meet with anything but fierce resentment.

The Messianic self-consciousness of Jesus was not exhausted by the elements which we have now considered. It was quite as impossible for him to conceive of suffering and death as the final outcome of his Messiahship as for the people generally to accept this consummation. Suffering and death there might be, there must be; but, if he was truly the Messiah, beyond the suffering and death there must be victorious compensation; and hence arose in the mind of Jesus, and grew at length into immense and overshadowing — nay, all-illuminating — bulk, the idea that after his death he would return to earth again to establish the Messianic kingdom of peace and righteousness. This idea did not correspond to his immediate resurrection as afterward

conceived by the primitive Christians. It corresponded with the second coming, which after his (imagined) resurrection filled with a vague unrest the bosom of the Christian community. He had said that this second coming would take place within the lifetime of his disciples, but their successors went on hoping against hope for many generations. Does the fact that Jesus cherished such a hope seem to you an impeachment of the soundness of his mind? Does it seem to remand him at once and forever to the order of fanatics? These derogatory conclusions are forbidden by the circumstances of the case. The expectation which he cherished of his second coming was not something entirely peculiar to himself. A constituent part of the popular Messianic conception was that the faithful dead would reappear at the inauguration of the Messianic kingdom. Believing this, Jesus could not believe that he, the Messiah, would not share in this general reappearance. It was not his difference from others but his conscious likeness to them that made such a belief inevitable. He did not anticipate a future special to himself, but a fortune common to many. The clew to his mental process here is given in that saying of Paul, "If we rise not, then is Christ not risen." His resurrection was implied in the general resurrection of the faithful dead. No special exaltation, therefore, was implied in his idea of his

second coming, but only his conformity in this particular, as in many others, with the received opinions of his time.

Not only did the average opinion that the Messiah must finally triumph, impose itself on the mind of Jesus, and the average opinion that the faithful dead would reappear, assist him to believe in his own reappearance, but his favorite passages of ancient prophecy came to his aid and enabled him to reconcile his conception of a suffering Messiah with the idea of his final triumph; for in these passages the suffering Servant of Jehovah was represented as being finally victorious; thus: "Behold my servant shall prosper; he shall be exalted and extolled and be very high. As many were astonished at him, so many nations shall exalt him. Kings shall shut their mouths before him. When he hath made his soul an offering for sin, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied. I will divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong, because he has poured out his soul unto death; and he was numbered with transgressors." It is in vain to suggest that, critically considered, there are many points in this delineation which do not correspond to the character of Jesus or his fate. Jesus was not a critic. Undoubtedly this delineation was intended

for "the true Israel," or, if for some individual, one whose experience had already made it good: Nevertheless, to Jesus it was prophetic of his own character, of his own career, ending apparently in shame and ignominious death, but after death resumed and going on to victory, and to a universal empire over the conscience of mankind.

Does it take anything from the heroism of Jesus to admit that, beyond the suffering and ignominy, he saw the triumph of his cause? I think not. He knew that he must bear the suffering and ignominy with only the resources of his mortal nature to fall back upon. Doubtless it fortified his will to think of the subsequent triumph, but not more than it always fortifies the will of the martyr to anticipate the triumph of his cause after his death, and in part because of it. John Brown was firm in his assurance that his death would "pay" its cost. No doubt this high assurance fortified his will, but that it took anything from his heroism I have never for a moment dreamed.

With what details Jesus imagined the sublime catastrophe which would accompany his reappearance after death, it is difficult to determine; with many less, quite certainly, than we should gather from the predictions which are ascribed to him in the New Testament. In Luke, especially, these predictions are evidently colored by the facts of

which the writer was aware concerning the destruction of Jerusalem. In Matthew, we approach more nearly to the original tradition; but the views of Jesus, on this head, must have been exceedingly indefinite. From Daniel, it is likely that he borrowed the idea of a "coming in the clouds of heaven." His favorite designation of himself as "the Son of Man" made this almost inevitable, once he had resolved to assume the rôle of the Messiah, for the Son of Man in Daniel is spoken of as coming in the clouds of heaven. Only this, however, is certain: that the Messianic self-consciousness of Jesus included the anticipation of his return to the earth after his death, to establish the kingdom of heaven. The criticism which endeavors to make it appear that the conceptions ascribed to Jesus here are entirely the reflection of the apostolic community is not thoroughly rational. It is necessary to ascribe these conceptions to Jesus, in order to account for the hold they had upon the primitive Christian community.

When Jesus resolved upon his Messianic character at Cæsarea-Philippi, the Galileans were already making their preparations to go up to Jerusalem to the great spring feast, — that of the Passover. Jesus had little inclination to resume his Galilean ministry. Better, he thought, to take an entirely fresh field for the assertion of his Messianic dig-

nity. Besides, the idea that the Messiah would make his appearance in Jerusalem was too deeply ingrained in the popular mind not to affect the mind of Jesus; nor was a moral reason wanting for his journey thither. Jerusalem was the stronghold of the pedantry and formalism which he had come to regard as the principal obstacles in the path of the Messiah. As the Messiah, he must confront the ecclesiastical formalism of Jerusalem on its own ground, assert his claim full in its face, summon it to unconditional surrender, and then, if need be, die, the more effectually to overwhelm it with the condemnation that would be sure to follow on his death. Once having resolved upon this course, "how was he straitened" till he had started on the way of its accomplishment. He allowed himself brief parting-time in Galilee. If he indulged his heart in any leave-taking with the family at Nazareth, no record of it has been preserved. It is only in the Fourth Gospel that his mother appears in Jerusalem, and at the foot of his cross. It is altogether improbable that she either went with him or followed him, considering the silence of the Synoptists. The "Stabat Mater" is still an excellent theme for the musician, but it is without any historical foundation. *Quis est homo, qui non fleret?* In the *absence* of Mary there is more abundant cause for tears.

It was late in February when Jesus announced

his Messiahship to his disciples in the north; and it was a month later, or a little more, when he bade farewell forever to the towns and villages where he had loved and been loved so much, and to the beautiful sea whose waters had imaged for him both the serenity and the agitation of his spirit. He sailed them now for the last time, on the first stage of his journey, landing on the south-east coast and taking his way through the country east of the Jordan. The more common route was through Samaria. Jesus avoided this in order, we may surmise, to be more alone with his disciples. He found it very difficult to fascinate them with his conception of the suffering Messiah. "Be it far from thee," said Peter. In spite of his continual warnings they persisted in believing that, having once declared himself in Jerusalem, victory would come and perch upon his banner; nor is it by any means unlikely that the natural buoyancy and hopefulness of his disposition asserted themselves at times, so as to overbear the rationalized conviction of his mind. At such times his expectations would assume a less sombre hue. Still, to prepare the minds and hearts of his disciples for the worst, must have been the most engrossing object of his care during the journey through the Peræa. Crossing the Jordan in that vicinity where only a year before he had received the baptism of John, the recent fate of the Baptist must

have been to him terribly suggestive of his own. Nevertheless, he held upon his way. To this journey, and to the weeks immediately preceding and following it, belongs all that is darkest, sternest, fiercest, in the teachings of Jesus, — the lurid visions of judgment, the hot denunciations of the self-righteousness and hypocrisy of the scribes and Pharisees; but to this journey also, and to him in the fullest consciousness of his Messianic mission, as if to rebuke in advance any attempt to deduce from this consciousness the negation of his pure humanity, belongs the saying to "the rich young man," who called him "Good Master;" "Why callest thou me good? There is one only who is good, and that is God."

Many were the lessons of prudence and forbearance that Jésus impressed upon his eager and passionate disciples as they journeyed on from one station to another of their pilgrim track. Short as the journey was from the valley of the Jordan up to Jerusalem, it involved an ascent of three thousand feet, through a populous district much of the way, but exceedingly barren, once Jericho and its groves of stately palm-trees had been left behind. With this section of the journey, synchronize the last attempts of Jesus to enamour his disciples with his conception of the Messianic kingdom triumphing through his sufferings and death. They had ears for the final triumph, none for the intermediate catas-

trophe. We see the mother of James and John beseeching for her sons the two best places in the approaching kingdom of heaven. We hear the reply of Jesus, "Can ye drink of the cup that I must drink of, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" They think it possible; but he can make no promises. We see the indignation of the Ten at the underhanded attempt of James and John to influence Jesus in their favor through their mother. We hear the rebuke of Jesus: "He that would be greatest among you let him be your servant." Arrived at Jericho, he made his home with the chief tax-gatherer of the city, the publican of publicans, as such the most despised of all its citizens. This act was his first challenge to the hierarchy of Judea on its own soil. The news of it, we may be sure, preceded Jesus to Jerusalem. The little band of his disciples was now receiving frequent accessions, mainly of Galilean folk upon their way to the great feast. From Jericho to Jerusalem the distance was eighteen miles, which were easily accomplished between the morning and the evening of a single day. A league beyond Jericho the scenery becomes suddenly barren. The roadway leads through steep, rocky defiles, — between mountains clothed with scanty verdure; but the dreariness of their surroundings could not damp the ardor of the growing crowd which now surrounded the

Galilean prophet and his immediate friends. As the day advanced the enthusiasm increased, and Jesus made no attempt to chill it with his dark forebodings. It may be that he questioned with himself whether, after all, he had not reckoned with himself too sternly, whether the bitter cup might not even now be changed to honey on his lips. Again the scenery changes. The Mount of Olives rises into view. Behind that, the pilgrims know, is all the splendor of Jerusalem. They climb its eastern slope and come to pleasant Bethany embosomed among verdurous hills; and then, a little way beyond, the top is reached, and looking westward they behold the Holy City lying at their feet,—a city of grim towers and lordly palaces and magnificent royal gardens, the temple overtopping all. How its long rows of marble columns and its roof of plated gold must have flashed and gleamed in the slant rays of the declining sun! A vision so inspiring might well produce a higher exaltation in the minds of Jesus and his followers. The journey now became a triumph. An ass was borrowed from some friendly person, and Jesus, who had always gone on foot, as if to mark the greater dignity of this occasion, allowed his disciples to saddle the creature with their garments, and so rode on to Bethphage, down by the Garden of Gethsemane, over the brook Kedron, then up again to the Sheep-gate, and so, at length,

into the city, — that magnet which had drawn him from the base of Hermon with irresistible attraction. Nothing would satisfy the disciples and the friends of Jesus, and even the strangers who could not resist the contagion of their earnestness, but to spread their garments for the ass to tread upon with leaves and branches from the adjacent fields, while, waving branches of the palm-tree to and fro, they cried, "Hosanna! Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord!"

The narrative of these events, as it is written in the New Testament, abounds in features that are evidently the dogmatic reflections of a later time. Apparently this triumphal entry was a spontaneous outburst of enthusiasm confined within narrow limits. It may be that Jesus hoped these limits would extend until they should comprise an effective majority of the population of the city, and that so, perhaps without a struggle, the hierarchy would be overthrown and his own kingdom set up in its place. It may be, he had spoken of these things with them so frequently, that he allowed himself to think that his disciples were completely disabused of their materialistic notions of his Messiahship; but from all that we can glean concerning them, we may be sure that they were not. Already they imagined themselves sitting on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. Jesus is made to promise them this honor in one

of the worst distortions of the New Testament tradition. It was their triumph quite as much as his own that they were celebrating as they spread their garments in his way.

Once in the city, it was only a short distance to the temple-area, and thither, less it would seem in obedience to any preconcerted plan, than because swept along by a great common impulse, went the enthusiastic crowd. It is in vain that we endeavor to imagine with what emotions Jesus entered the sacred precinct. The sight that greeted him he had seen before, but then it was with reverence almost unmixed with any other feeling. Now all was changed. If he knew his own heart, it was entirely alienated from this magnificent and costly ritual. But it was so imposing that his temerity in expecting that he could grapple with it and overthrow it must have seemed to him, then and there, almost a madman's fancy. His mood was, however, too exalted to permit him to take counsel for a moment with any doubt or fear. Immediately the acclamations of his retinue were drowned amid the various din and uproar of the temple-court, — the mutter of prayers, the chanting of hymns, the clink of coin, the lowing of oxen, the bleating of sheep, the chaffering and shouting of the buyers and sellers of the sacrificial animals and the wine and oil and other things necessary to the routine of sacrifice. Instantly at sight and

hearing of these things the enthusiasm of Jesus culminated in an act of almost inconceivable daring. With whip in hand he overturned the tables of the money-changers, and drove their occupants and the dove-sellers and cattle-dealers from their booths and stalls, crying as he did so, "It is written, my house shall be called a house of prayer, but ye have made it a den of thieves." In the full tide of the Passover such an act would have been impossible, and at any time it justifies a sceptical approach; but we must remember that in the bones of every Jew lurked a certain reverence for the prophetic office, and a fear of spurning as an impostor a veritable messenger of God. We must remember, too, that one man, armed with the strength of personal conviction, has ever been a terror to a crowd of mercenary formalists. In this act of Jesus there is nothing improbable, if we make due allowance for the intensity of his enthusiasm, and the character of the people on whose backs he laid the nearest whip at hand.

The hierarchy could not, if it would, see in this act of Jesus merely a rebuke of the dishonesty of the temple-traffickers. Their traffic was essential to the temple-ritual. The act of Jesus was a condemnation of this ritual. So, at any rate, it must have been regarded, and from this moment we may regard the fate of Jesus as sealed. Did he himself regret his action, as, in the deepening twilight, he

drew apart with his disciples out of the city, to spend the night with friends in Bethany? It is not unlikely. If he could have deliberately chosen his initiative it would have been different from this. He would have besought the hierarchy and the people to forsake their toilsome ceremonial for his ritual of righteousness. He would have begun in love and not in wrath; but circumstances had determined otherwise for him. The die was cast. No backward step was possible.

Jesus had anticipated the crowd of pilgrims, and had two or three weeks at his disposal before the feast of the Passover. Every evening we must imagine him leaving the city, and retiring beyond the brow of Olivet to spend the night with some new-made friend in Bethany. A majority of the pilgrims to the feasts were always housed in the outlying villages; but this resting-place may have been further determined by the desire of Jesus to prolong his life at least until the Passover, and it was not long before he knew that emissaries of the Pharisaic party were upon his track. Early every morning we must imagine him again returning to the city, and to the fore-court of the temple or the temple-synagogue. Here there was no lack of opportunity for the exposition of his doctrine of religion. At first his attitude seems to have been rather defensive than aggressive. A certain shrewdness is a notable characteristic of the mind of Je-

sus. Educated as a rabbi, he would have been a match for any rabbi in the land in textual fence. With such training as he had he was always equal to the occasion. Frequently the arguments with which he met his opponents are without any absolute validity, but as arguments *ad hominem* they could hardly be improved. One of the devices of his enemies was to identify him with the movement of the Zealots, which within a few years had attained to great importance under the lead of Judas the Gaulonite. The leading principle of Judas was that it was not admissible for a faithful Jew to pay a tax to Rome. The question put to Jesus, "Is it lawful to pay tribute unto Cæsar?" was intended to commit him to the principles of the Zealots. The reply of Jesus, "Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's," was certainly a subterfuge, but it turned the edge of the attack. A criticism, perhaps too genial, has found in this reply a suggestion that rendering to God his own, the Roman tax would be forever done away. Such may have been the thought of Jesus, but we must not refine too much upon his words.

The days went by, and each in turn brought with it fresh and more dangerous complications. To these days belongs the parable of the Two Sons, one who said, "I go," and went not, while the other said, "I go not," and yet went, followed up

by that terrible saying, "The publicans and harlots shall go into the kingdom of heaven before *you*." To these days belongs the story of the woman taken in adultery, an interpolation in the Fourth Gospel, but a valid piece of primitive tradition. Jesus was a strict constructionist of the law of marriage; divorce on any ground he could not justify; the exception of the Gospels is not his; but the spontaneous crime of the woman who was brought to him seemed venial in comparison with the Pharisaical casuistry of divorce. Here was another terrible offence. But there came a day when all the indignation which had for months been gathering in his heart against the ceremonialism of the time, but which had only shown itself fitfully, burst every barrier and sent a flood of lava-like denunciation flaming and scorching into the midst of his antagonists, the purists of the synagogue and temple. "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint, anise, and cumin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, — justice, mercy, and fidelity. Blind guides that you are, straining out gnats and swallowing camels. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and platter, but the inside is full of extortion and impurity. Blind Pharisee, cleanse first that which is within the cup and the platter, and then the outside will be clean also. Woe unto you, scribes

and Pharisees, hypocrites! for you are like white-washed sepulchres, that seem all pure without, but within are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness. Even so you outwardly appear righteous, but within you are full of hypocrisy and iniquity. You serpents, you generation of vipers, how can you escape the damnation of hell?" This is no feeble rage. Such words as these came from the lips of no such lackadaisical Jesus as Christian art has everywhere inflicted on mankind. The picture has yet to be painted which shall be as manly as he was; and let this be noted carefully, that the dizzying height, the dazzling brilliancy, of his Messianic self-consciousness had not obscured for him one line of his original "good tidings." At the heart of these withering denunciations is the same gospel of character — *to be and not to seem* — which was at the heart of the first kindly utterances of the Galilean spring-time. Let us do Jesus so much of simple justice. Let us confess that the most passionate vagaries of his Messianic dream were correlated with moral principles, as simple as they were sublime. The particular moral precepts of Jesus will not, in every instance, bear the strain of social science, and of wide experience. His principles, subordinating ceremonial to social conduct, and social conduct to private character, are the same immutable and glorious principles, yesterday, to-day, and forever.

The New Testament is entirely silent in regard to the relations of Jesus to "the common people" while he was at Jerusalem, unless we have a hint of failure to enlist them on his side in the charge he brings against the scribes and Pharisees: "Hypocrites that you are! for you shut men out of the kingdom of heaven. You will not enter yourselves, and you forbid and prevent those who would!" This would seem to indicate that the scribes and Pharisees had frustrated his attempt to marshal the common people under his flag. The parable of the vintner who sent his own son to gather the fruit of his vineyard, after he had sent various servants, marks, very possibly, the hottest point of controversy before the final catastrophe. The husbandmen of the parable take the son and drag him outside of the vineyard and kill him. Here, in one breath, Jesus distinctly avows his Messianic claim, which he had kept more or less in the background, and the nature of his expectations. The more pious in the community hastened to make these expectations good. In this particular they would on no account have had him disappointed. On Tuesday evening, the twelfth Nisan (the month Nisan of that time corresponded very nearly with our April), there was a meeting at the house of the ex-high-priest Caiaphas, to see what might be ventured in order to compass the destruction of Jesus. It was resolved

to delay action until after the Passover; but on the thirteenth there came to certain of the Sanhedrin one of the twelve disciples of Jesus, Judas of Kerioth, and for thirty shekels of silver (about twenty dollars) agreed to deliver Jesus into their hands, and to do this before the Passover. A bait so tempting was of course swallowed at once, and at a bound Judas obtained immortal infamy. He has had his defenders. What traitor has not, sooner or later? It has been argued that he was impatient to consummate the destruction of Jesus, so that his subsequent triumph might be the more quickly assured. This is not likely. Nor is it likely that his aim was mercenary. Of all surmises, the most rational is that he was disappointed by the Messianic ideal of Jesus. His own was the popular ideal. The ideal of Jesus was so different that he felt himself deceived and wronged. A suffering Messiah, indeed! What fulfilment was there here of the great national hope, or of his own ambition to sit upon a throne ruling one of the twelve tribes of Israel? Whatever the motive, the act remains. On Wednesday evening Jesus was betrayed already, and Judas only waited for a favorable opportunity to carry out his iniquitous design.

Thursday, the fourteenth Nisan, must have been a busy day for the priests and temple-servants of Jerusalem. At the Passover of A. D. 66, Josephus would have us believe that two hundred and fifty-

six thousand lambs were slaughtered. This may be a fivefold exaggeration. Let us say fifty thousand. No doubt as many as this were sacrificed in the year of Jesus' death; and all of these must be carried to the temple, to be examined by the priests before they could be killed. Pronounced without blemish, they were handed over to their owners to be killed upon the spot, "the priests in two long rows receiving the blood in gold and silver vessels," and passing it along till it was poured out at the foot of the altar. Then the animals were skinned, and certain parts were left before the altar while the rest was carried home to be roasted for the evening. The disciples of Jesus, unnoticed among thousands of Galileans, brought their lamb to the temple, and in the evening Jesus found that every preparation had been made for eating the feast of the Passover at the house of some friendly person. This feast was ordinarily an exceedingly joyous occasion. It was a hearty meal, and wine was drunk freely, two glasses being allowed after "the cup of blessing," which was the third. Its character has been obscured in popular estimation by the "Lord's Supper," with its nominal eating and drinking. But "the last supper" of Jesus with his disciples was not a joyful occasion. The Master's mind was too intensely fixed on his immediate future. For many days he had felt the coils tightening around him. He knew that they

would crush him soon. "How have I longed," he said, "to eat this Passover with you, for I shall not eat it again till it be the true feast of redemption in the kingdom of God." But he had special reasons for disquietude. A vague suspicion haunted him that one of the twelve had gone over to the enemy. It may be that something in the manner of Judas singled him out as the traitor. Matthew represents him as saying "Is it I?" and Jesus as answering, "Yes." Only those who believe everything will believe this.

What would we not give for any faithful account of the words of Jesus upon this occasion, — the last evening of his life! Let us hope that among them there were tender reminiscences of his life in Galilee, and gracious messages for the family in Nazareth who had been so little able to sympathize with him or to comprehend his spirit. But naturally it was the future which engrossed his thoughts most deeply. Words of warning and encouragement that had been many times spoken must be again enforced. Then, in the spirit of the ancient prophets, he performed a symbolic action. Breaking the bread and giving it to his disciples, he said, "Eat, it is my body." Passing the cup to them he said, "This is my blood of the covenant that shall flow for the salvation of many. Of a truth I tell you that I shall never again drink of this Paschal wine till I drink it new in the estab-

lished kingdom of God." In Luke and Paul we have the statement that Jesus asked his disciples when they ate and drank together to hold him in remembrance. Never was anything more simple! Never was anything more natural! But to what manifold distortion have the Christian ages subjected that simple action and those simple words! From the words, "This is my body," in the course of eight hundred years the Roman Church developed the doctrine of transubstantiation, — that the bread of the eucharist is bread no longer, but literally and only the human body of God; and Protestantism still speaks as confidently as ever of "the institution of the Lord's Supper." There was no institution. There was an act of natural human tenderness. The occasion determined the form of his expression. He would have been infinitely sadder than he was if he had dreamed what sanguinary systems of theology would be built upon his figures of speech. He did but ask of his disciples that, till his second coming, as often as they ate the Paschal bread and drank its ruddy wine, they would remember how his body had been broken and his blood had flowed for the establishment of new and higher relations between man and man, and between man and God. Oh, the pity of it; — that from an action and from words so simple and humane, should have come doctrines and practices more foreign to the mind of Jesus

than any he endeavored to abolish by his life and death!

"And when they had sung a hymn they went out." The hymn was the usual hymn sung upon this occasion. It was near midnight, and Bethany was some three miles away, — between two and three. The oppression of Jesus grew deeper as they walked along. It may be that he noticed that Judas was no longer with the rest. Upon the way they came to an olive garden where there was an olive press that gave to the place its name — Gethsemane. That garden is almost too sacred for our thought to enter. The nature of that inward struggle of which it was the melancholy scene, we cannot fully know. Touching and sweet as are the words ascribed to Jesus, we cannot be certain that he uttered them, for his disciples were asleep, and he could not have repeated them; and yet we may not doubt that the narrator has fully entered into the spirit of that hour. "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me." What was the cup that was so bitter to his taste? The cup of shame and death, death in its most horrible form. The agony in Gethsemane was the last and sharpest struggle between his natural, human sensibility and the imperious exigencies of his ideal. Because this man was human he was in love with life. Because he must think of himself as the Messiah he had doomed himself to death. He did

himself injustice by his antithesis, "The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." It was his spirit, not his flesh merely, that drew back from such a doom. What was the outcome of this terrible inward struggle? Again we cannot help feeling that the narrator has divined it well: "Father, if this cup cannot pass away till I have drunk it, thy will be done!"

Jesus would go no further on his way to Bethany that night. He had just returned to his disciples when Judas made his appearance at the head of a mixed company of temple soldiers and high priest's retainers, and indicated to them their victim with a treacherous kiss, the prototype of all kissing treachery from that day to this. You would not have me enter fully into the details of the remaining hours of Jesus' life. You know how he was taken to the house of Caiaphas, and in the last hours of the night put upon his trial before the Sanhedrin. Jewish scholars have assured us that the Sanhedrin was not regularly convened, and that the condemnation of Jesus was by a faction which had no regular authority. Certainly the proceedings were hasty. The members of the Sanhedrin must have been in ill humor at their early summons; but under the most favorable circumstances only one result was possible. There was abundant evidence that Jesus had been guilty of blasphemy, or, as we should say, of heresy. Asked if he were the Mes-

siah, he made no denial. Here was no ground for his conviction, but it was clear that his ideas were subversive of the existing order of religion. Doubtless the members of the Sanhedrin did what they thought was right. Their sacred books, which all Christians but the merest handful consider the infallible word of God, commanded them expressly to put to death any prophet who should not conform to the received traditions. Jesus did not conform to these. Therefore his sentence was inevitable and, if the Old Testament is an infallible revelation, absolutely just and right.

Through the chill morning hours Jesus was made the laughing-stock of brutal clowns, and buffeted by their rude hands. At day-break the Sanhedrin was again convened, and a deputation of its members, taking Jesus with them, went to the Procurator, Pontius Pilate, to get his confirmation of their sentence of death, and his directions as to the manner of its execution. Their own law prescribed stoning, but, merciful as such a death would have been compared with the crucifixion, they had no executive power. Pilate was sufficiently cruel and bloodthirsty, but his hatred of the Jews made him suspicious of their justice in this matter. It was in Jesus' favor that they wished for his destruction; and something in the presence and bearing of Jesus may have impressed him. It was his custom to release a prisoner to the people at every Pass-

over. He now gave them their choice between Jesus of Nazareth and another Jesus (for Jesus was by no means an uncommon name), whose surname was Barabbas, a seditious person who had killed a Roman soldier in a brawl. To his astonishment the crowd preferred Jesus the Zealot to Jesus the Messiah, and the latter was condemned to die upon the cross.

It was a fearful death for any man to die. Frequently the torture lasted two or three days, the victim finally perishing from hunger or nervous exhaustion. In the case of Jesus, death was not so long delayed. His sufferings lasted only some six or eight hours. The women of Jerusalem were allowed the privilege of giving to the crucified a benumbing or intoxicating potion. This was offered to Jesus but refused. Not one of the twelve was there to witness either his sufferings or this heroic act of self-denial; but Mary of Magdala, Mary Cleophas, and Salome (whose sons had vanished with the rest of the apostles), were there with thoughts that were "too deep for tears." These are our only witnesses of the last hours of Jesus, and it is not likely that we owe to these any of the utterances ascribed to Jesus in the New Testament. Beautiful and suggestive as are some of these, they are probably the inventions of a loving imagination and not the records of what was actually said. Before sunset, soon after three o'clock it

is most likely, his head sank on his breast and his heart ceased its beating. Never was one, who loved his fellow-men so much, more cruelly destroyed.

Left to themselves the Romans would have allowed his body to remain for birds of prey to feed upon, but it was a Jewish custom to give decent burial even to the most abandoned criminal. The legend runs that, in the case of Jesus, one Joseph of Arimathea, of whom we have this mention only, begged for his body and, having obtained it, performed for it the last sad offices with all duty and affection. "And there was Mary Magdalene and the other Mary sitting over against the sepulchre."

The concern of the biographer ends with Jesus, as with every other person, at his death. His imagined resurrection and his speculative deification belong to the history of ideas not to the biography of the man. We are persuaded that an immediate resurrection formed no part of his conception of his future, so that in this particular he was not disappointed; but that he did expect [illegible] earth at some time in no distant [illegible] certain as need be, and absolutely [illegible] did not so return. Nevertheless, [illegible] tion that his cause would triumph [illegible] was justified by the event. The reli[illegible] not without various corruption and [illegible] with conscious allegiance to his sacre[illegible] religion of three hu[illegible] millions of

world. Could anything seem more unlikely as he hung upon the cross that April day, with only three women in the world as his confessed disciples? And yet it was his dying so that made Christianity a universal religion. "Never was that which bore the outward appearance of ruin and annihilation turned into such signal and decisive victory as in the death of Jesus."[1] As Theodore Parker said: "A live man may hurt his own cause; a dead one cannot soil his clean, immortal doctrines with unworthy hands." So long as Jesus lived there was danger that his and the popular conception of the Messiah would approximate to each other, that some sort of a compromise would be effected. The result of such a compromise would certainly have been that Christianity would have been only another Jewish sect, or that Judaism would have absorbed it altogether. In either case it would not have been a universal religion. From that day to this Judaism has had a record which is not inglorious, however little glory it reflects upon the Christian world; but Judaism was too intensely national in its instincts ever to become a universal faith. The death of Jesus on the cross made it forever impossible for the Jews to allow his Messianic claim. Paul, seeing in that death the abolition of the Jewish law, anticipated the last result of our historical science. The actual triumph of

[1] Baur's Christian History. Vol. I., p. 41.

Jesus dwarfs his apocalyptic vision; and such a triumph would have been impossible but for his ignominious death.

I am aware how dreadfully inadequate must be any representation of the life and character of Jesus within the limits I have allowed myself in these discourses; but, if I have sketched even the outlines of his life and character with tolerable exactness, any frequenter of the churches of the popular religion might well question with himself whether I have not made some great mistake, whether it is really possible that I have been talking about the same person who is called Jesus Christ in orthodox circles, and worshipped as the second person in the Trinity, as a being coëternal and coëqual with God. The same and not the same. Jesus of Nazareth could not have been the person I have depicted, and at the same time or at any time have been the second person in the Trinity, a being coëternal and coëqual with God; but it is as the person I have depicted, and not as the second person of the Trinity, that he appears in the New Testament, when due allowance has been made for the origin and character of the different books that make up our sources of information. Jesus of Nazareth, as I have drawn him, was a man; a man with an incomparable genius for religion; a man of invincible conscience and immeasurable love; a man limited in many ways by the conceptions of his time but

making, even of the most irrational of these conceptions, channels through which he poured the natural goodness of his heart in a great tide of vivifying and exalting power. Almost as different as possible from the theological God-Man of the churches, in the fulness of his human personality he was one whom we can hardly reverence too much; one the disparity of whose ideal and actual experience we cannot pity so much as it deserves; and one, in view of all he was and all he did and all he hoped to do, "whom not having seen we love."

VI.

THE RESURRECTION.

"WHERE, then, is the force of that *argument of despair*, as we called it, that if St. Paul vouches for the bodily resurrection of Jesus and for his appearance after it, and is mistaken in so vouching, then he must be an imbecile and credulous enthusiast, untruthful, unprofitable? We see that for a man to believe in preternatural incidents, of a kind admitted by the common belief of his time, proves nothing at all against his general truthfulness and sagacity. Nay, we see that even while affirming such preternatural incidents, he may with profound insight seize the true and natural aspect of them, the aspect which will survive and profit when the miraculous aspect has faded. He may give us, in the very same work, current error, and also fruitful and profound new truth, the error's future corrective."

MATTHEW ARNOLD.

VI.

THE RESURRECTION.

ROMAN CATHOLICISM revolves preëminently around the doctrine of the incarnation. So do the broad and high parties in the Episcopalian church of England and America. Protestantism generally is preëminently devoted to the doctrine of the atonement. The doctrine of the resurrection is less exclusively the property of any great communion. It is almost, if not quite, equally dear to Romanists and Protestants. In the first stages of Christian development, it occupied the foremost place in the mind of every Christian believer; and from that time to this it has played a stupendous part upon the stage of Christian history. To the average Christian believer, the resurrection of Jesus from the dead has been and is the miracle of miracles; the sole and all sufficing proof of immortality. Even within the limits of the Unitarian denomination there are clergymen who insist that without the resurrection of Jesus there is no ground for hope in immortality, but that this

being given all is safe and sure. Thirty or forty years ago this was the general attitude among Unitarians. The preacher spent his force in demonstrating the worthlessness of every natural argument. To believe in immortality on any ground save that of Jesus' resurrection was Deism in one of its most baleful forms.

Some of you, I doubt not, think the matter hardly worth an hour's consideration. The life of Jesus, such will say, perhaps, is one thing but his resurrection is another. The former has some human interest; the latter none. That Jesus lived and died is possible. That he rose from the dead is impossible.

To which I answer, Yes and No. That Jesus rose from the dead I have no belief whatever; but because other men (hundreds of millions of them) have a belief in his resurrection, and because thousands of millions have had this belief in the past, its human interest is inconceivably great. We cannot be indifferent to it. We cannot dismiss it with a sneer. It challenges our closest scrutiny. It is not as if it were a doctrine of the past. It is the accepted doctrine of the present time. Those who do not accept it form a small minority, a minority so small that, in comparison with the majority, it is inappreciable. Like Posthumus in "Cymbeline," it melts "from the smallness of a gnat to air." Article IV., of the Established Church of England,

reads: "Christ did truly rise again from death, and took again his body with flesh, bones and all things appertaining to the perfection of man's nature, wherewith he ascended into heaven and there sitteth, until he return to judge all men at the last day." This is one of the articles to which Dean Stanley subscribes, and hundreds of men as honest and intelligent as he. This is the doctrine of three hundred millions of Christian people. This is the doctrine of the New Testament as it stands. The article does not exceed the statements and the implications of the record, not "in the estimation of a hair." Does it seem presumptuous in us, even when we have added to ourselves all who agree with us, to oppose ourselves to a doctrine which has the suffrages of millions, of the Bible, and of history, and of thousands of very learned persons occupying high ecclesiastical positions? It may seem so, but we cannot help it. But we can help some things. We can help any hap-hazard or contemptuous rejection of a doctrine which is so widely accepted, so venerable, so dear. We can examine it carefully, conscientiously, in every aspect it presents, before we break with it forever. Not to do this would be presumptuous and this we must not be.

At the same time we must give no heed to the voice of the charmer, charm he never so wisely, who would fain persuade us that the interest at

stake should either warn us off from the consideration of this matter altogether, or should make us throw our prepossession into the scale with every argument for the resurrection of Jesus. The interest at stake is supposed to be our personal immortality. Substantially we are advised not to probe this matter too deeply lest we should find that it does not confirm our hope of a hereafter; but if it does not we want to know it. Every man, who is a man, will say this. Only a coward will say anything else. The hope of immortality is too grand a hope to fortify itself with evidence which is consciously illusive. We do not want to pretend to believe; we want to believe; but knowing as we do that the hope of millions is based upon this belief would we do anything to weaken it? The rational religionist is frequently confronted with this appeal to his better nature. His answer ought to be: We do not flatter ourselves that we are going to convert the world to our opinion in a day. The great majority will go on believing pretty much as they do now for many generations. Nothing that we think or say will make any great impression on this majority; but such as are able to receive it — the conclusion to which we have arrived — let them receive it. They will prefer it, as we do, to an illusory foundation for any hope, even the greatest.

And if the magnitude of the issues at stake will

not deter us altogether from the consideration of this matter, nq more will it constitute, in and of itself, an added force to every argument for the resurrection of Jesus. Let us play no tricks with ourselves. The force of arguments on either side is not affected by the magnitude of the issues at stake, whatever be the matter under consideration. If the testimony in a recent trial, for example, was sufficient to convict the man of murder, it was not less so because his own life was involved; it would not have been more so had there been no penalty. If the testimony for the resurrection of Jesus from the dead is sufficient to establish this as an historic fact, it is still sufficient, whatever is bound up in this conclusion. If the testimony is insufficient it is not made any less so by the fact, if fact it be, that our personal immortality is involved. We cannot use the final implication to piece out the original foundation. We cannot say the foundation must be satisfactory because it is necessary to support such a magnificent superstructure. On the contrary the more magnificent the proposed superstructure, the more careful shall we be concerning the foundation. Could we be sure that the resurrection of Jesus would involve our personal immortality we should scrutinize it no less sharply; nay all the more sharply; for we do not wish to cherish great beliefs and hopes on any doubtful evidence.

But does the resurrection of Jesus from the dead involve our personal immortality? If his resurrection could be proved would our immortality follow? Christian theology answers, Yes. Rational religion answers emphatically, No; and the wonder is that any man of ordinary intelligence cannot see that rational religion is right. Let us assume for the present that the resurrection of Jesus was a fact; that dead as could be on Friday afternoon, on Sunday morning he was alive again, and was no mere phantom but a man of flesh and blood, with the marks of his crucifixion on his person; and that within a short time, with his corporeal substance, — in the language of the Article, "with his flesh and bones and all things appertaining to the perfection of man's nature" — he ascended into heaven. Assuming all this, where is the argument for our personal immortality? The resurrection of Jesus is a resurrection of the body; his ascension is an ascension of the body; his immortality is an immortality of the body. Now it is quite impossible for us to have any such resurrection, any such ascension, any such corporeal immortality. Our bodies moulder away. They mingle with the elements. They are taken up into vegetable and animal structures. What analogy can there be between our resurrection at some infinitely distant day and that of Jesus from twenty-four to thirty-six hours after his death? There can be no anal-

ogy whatever, and therefore there can be no argument from the one thing to the other.

Again in popular estimation, from the standpoint of Christian orthodoxy, the resurrection of Jesus from the dead was the crowning act of his miraculous career. It was in virtue of his superhuman character that he triumphed over death; but what argument is here for the resurrection of people who are not superhuman? What man has done, man may do; but it does not equally follow that he can do anything that has been done by a being whose nature and genius were entirely exceptional. To prove anything universal the nature of Jesus should have been simply and entirely human. It was so in reality, but it is not so in the theory of his resurrection. It is necessary to this theory that he should have been *sui generis*, a being unlike any other. This or no resurrection; but this being granted his resurrection if established would have no universal significance. It would not argue anything for you and me. Our hope of immortality would receive no accession, suffer no abatement, from his triumph. It would be entirely unaffected.

Such being the relation of Jesus' resurrection to our personal immortality we can approach it without bias. The situation makes no such demand upon our honesty and courage as it would if the relation were that which is generally as-

sumed. We can look at it in the dry light. We can ask, Is it, or is it not, a fact? without regard to the ulterior consequence. We can do this at least so far as it concerns the matter of our personal immortality; but the effort has been frequently made to establish a secondary bias in favor of the resurrection by insisting on the importance of the doctrine in the development of early Christianity. Perhaps no other argument for the resurrection has been insisted on so much as this. The development of early Christianity we are assured was one of the most remarkable and beneficent social transformations that the world has ever known, and we agree to this; and then the advocate of the resurrection goes on, "But if the resurrection of Jesus was not a fact, then was the most remarkable and beneficent social transformation the world has ever known the result of an illusion." Here is a conclusion so unpalatable that it is assumed that rather than accept it we shall accept the resurrection; but the implications of a result, however unpalatable, do not affect the arguments by which a result is established. If the testimony for the resurrection is insufficient it remains so, whatever this result implies. If the testimony against it is destructive it remains so, whatever be the implication. That an illusion contributed to the development of an important social change is doubtless an unpalatable result; but it is not

so unpalatable as the fact of an actual resurrection from the dead would be to one whose intelligence had been educated to admire, whose heart had been inspired to trust, the habitual order of the world. Moreover nothing is surer than that illusion plays an important part in all the changes of history, for better and for worse. Finally, the resurrection doctrine was not the only force that was grandly operative in the development of early Christianity. The resurrection doctrine was one of many forces, an exceedingly important one, but in comparison with the aggregate of all the other forces at work, not so considerable that we are obliged to feel that the development of early Christianity was wholly, or to any great extent, the result of an illusion.

From our secondary, as from our primary, bias in favor of the resurrection, we are thus set free. We can approach it without any side-long glances at the chances of our personal immortality upon the one hand, or at the development of early Christianity upon the other.

The return of a man to life who has been actually dead for a period of twenty-four hours or longer is an occurrence of such exceeding rarity, to say the least, that the evidence by which it is established ought to be of the most impressive and conclusive character. I am aware that solely in the interest of the New Testament miracles, and

especially in the interest of Jesus' resurrection, it has been discovered that "evidence is evidence," and that it requires no more evidence to establish a resurrection from the dead than it does to establish anything else, even the most ordinary fact; but let any one of those who reason thus hear of any unusual event, and instinctively he requires more evidence for it than for an ordinary event. Thus, if one of them should hear that an omnibus had been seen going up or down Broadway, drawn, driven, and freighted in the usual manner, one day last week, he would believe this without a moment's hesitation; but if he should hear that a locomotive, with a train of cars attached, was seen going up or down Broadway, he would require a hundred times as much evidence for this statement as for the first; and if he should hear that a train of cars had been seen going up or down Broadway without any locomotive or any means of propulsion or traction, the amount of evidence he would require, before he would accept such a statement as the truth, would be infinitely greater than for either of the previous statements. Nothing is surer than that we do all of us spontaneously, and especially those of us who have a judgment at all educated, demand more and clearer evidence for unusual than for usual events, and in proportion to their unusualness; and nothing is surer than that we ought to do exactly this, and that men's so

doing is in all ages one of the prime conditions of human progress. The more evidence men have demanded for extraordinary events, the more territory has science conquered from the realm of superstition and annexed to its own.

Now let us consider whether the evidence for the resurrection of Jesus is as much stronger than that which we demand for any ordinary event, as this event is more than ordinary; — whether it is as strong as evidence should be for any event which is remarkably contradictory of our average experience.

The four gospels are our principal authorities. The resurrection of Jesus is related in each one of these with more or less detail. Matthew represents Mary Magdalene and the other Mary as going on Saturday evening[1] to the sepulchre; Mark represents these and Salome as going early Sunday morning, "after[2] the rising of the sun;" Luke increases the number of women, and fixes the time before sunrise; John represents Mary Magdalene as coming alone, "early, while it was yet dark." Here, to begin with, is a certain amount of inconsistency; and, other things being equal, that one or more women at some time or other went to the sepulchre would be all we could infer. According to Matthew, in the presence of

[1] The original Greek has this meaning.

[2] The Greek has this force.

Mary Magdalene and the other Mary, there was a great earthquake, caused by an angel who came and rolled away the stone of the sepulchre, and sat on it; "and for fear of him the keepers did shake and became as dead men; and the angel said unto the women, Fear ye not, for I know that ye seek Jesus who hath been crucified. He is not here, for he was raised, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay; and go quickly and tell his disciples that he was raised from the dead; and behold he goeth before you into Galilee: there shall ye see him." Here you will notice there is no claim that any one witnessed the resurrection. The guard do not see it, nor the women. The angel informs them that it has already taken place. Again, this account, if true, would preclude the appearance of the risen Jesus to any one in Jerusalem. That God should send an angel to hasten the disciples to Galilee to meet Jesus there, and that afterward they should see him in Jerusalem, gives God the appearance of a person who does not know his own mind, or the angel the appearance of not being well-informed. This story must have been first current in circles where an appearance in Jerusalem was no part of the tradition; but from beginning to end the story is a tissue of improbabilities. We have an angel with his appearance like lightning and his raiment white as snow. Now an angel in a story is as sure a

proof that the story is a legend, as a trout in the milk that the milk has suffered from adulteration. The angel causes an earthquake. A very little knowledge of the nature of an earthquake is sufficient to discredit this one, mentioned only by Matthew, among whose "properties" earthquakes particularly abound. He introduces one at the moment of Jesus' death, in the course of which "the graves were opened, and many bodies of the saints which slept arose and went into Jerusalem and were seen by many;" but the other gospels do not mention any such occurrence, though it is sufficiently impressive for a passing word. The guard at the tomb is another trait peculiar to the First Gospel. It was evidently placed there ideally, to rebut any charge that the body of Jesus was secretly removed by his disciples, not actually to prevent such removal. That Pilate would detail a Roman guard for such a purpose is incredible; that the guard, to please the Sanhedrin, would risk their lives by confessing that they fell asleep, is unspeakably absurd. The account in Matthew also suggests the question, What was the need of an earthquake to roll away the stone of the sepulchre when Jesus was already risen? for it is so represented.

Let us now consider the account of the resurrection in the Second Gospel. It is that after sunrise[1] Sunday morning, Mary Magdalene and Mary

[1] Literally, "The sun having just risen." Folsom's translation.

the mother of James, and Salome went with spices to embalm the body of Jesus and found the stone of the sepulchre rolled away, and entering, saw a young man sitting on the right side, in a long, white garment, who spoke in terms very similar to those of the angel in Matthew. Here are several divergencies from the account in Matthew. There, an earthquake, — here, none; there, the stone rolled away after the arrival of the women, — here, before; there, the angel sitting on the stone, — here, in the sepulchre; there, they go and tell the disciples, — here, in flagrant disobedience to the angelic command, they tell no one; and with the assertion that they told no one the Second Gospel properly ends, for the concluding verses (9–20) are not found in the early manuscripts. These verses evidently embody an independent legend, more nearly allied to that of the Fourth Gospel than to the others.

The account in Luke is different in several particulars from that of Matthew and Mark. It agrees with Mark in finding the stone removed. It adds Joanna to the two women of Matthew, where Mark adds Salome. It adds other women who are not specified. In place of the angel on the stone in Matthew, and the "young man" in the sepulchre in Mark, we have here two men in shining garments, who remind the women that Jesus had promised to rise again on the third day. "And

they remembered his words." As if they could have forgotten them if he had ever spoken such! The women go and tell the eleven all these things. "And these words appeared to them an idle tale, and they believed them not." Strange, if Jesus had indeed, as the Synoptists tell, again and again foretold to them his resurrection! It is not claimed here any more than in Matthew and Mark that any one saw the resurrection. Perhaps the most important difference is that Galilee is no longer specified, as in Matthew and Mark, as the place where Jesus will show himself to his disciples. The bearing of this difference will be hereafter apparent.

So far, in these lectures, I have made no use of the Fourth Gospel, for reasons given in my first lecture. It is a production of the second century, and not like the Synoptics the result of traditional agglomeration, but a dogmatic treatise in which everything is made to serve the preconceived idea that Jesus was the incarnate Logos; but in its treatment of the resurrection, it has the appearance of representing a more developed form of the legend. Mary Magdalene goes to the sepulchre alone and finds the stone rolled away. She runs and finds Peter and John, and these two run to the sepulchre and find it empty. Not knowing the Scriptures — that Jesus must rise from the dead — they go to their own homes. Strange again

if Jesus had foretold his resurrection so frequently! Here, again, there is no claim that any one saw the resurrection. The disciples went to their own homes without any idea that such a thing had taken place.

But when they had gone home Mary Magdalene, whom they had left weeping at the mouth of the tomb, looks in and sees two angels sitting "one at the head, the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus lay," though a minute before the disciples had seen nothing but the grave-clothes. Suddenly turning, she sees Jesus, but taking him for the gardener, she asks him if he has taken away her master's body, and if so, where it is laid. Jesus calls her by name, and then she recognizes him and goes and tells the disciples that she has seen him. Here again there is no mention of Galilee, nor any promise of meeting the disciples anywhere; rather an implication that he will not do so. That various meetings are narrated further on, points to the fact that the account in the Fourth Gospel is an incongruous jumble of various legends.

And now let us consider the different statements in regard to the appearance of Jesus to different persons after his resurrection. One of the most interesting of these statements is that relating to the walk to Emmaus. This statement is in Luke. Two disciples, not of the twelve, were walking towards Emmaus, a village seven or eight miles from

Jerusalem. They are joined by a person whom they do not recognize, who expounds to them the Scriptures concerning the death and resurrection of Jesus. Afterward, while eating with them, he takes bread, breaks it, and gives thanks. Then they recognize Jesus and he vanishes from their sight. Beautiful as it is, the legendary character of this story should be apparent to the dullest sense. No such village as Emmaus can be identified within seven or eight miles from Jerusalem. A village of similar name in Galilee suggests that this account originally belonged to the circle of tradition which represented Jesus as first appearing to his disciples in Galilee. We have here a Jesus who is not recognized, although he is corporeal enough to eat food, while he is at the same time a phantom who appears and vanishes like an Homeric deity. It is said that the disciples, returning to Jerusalem, found the eleven and were told that Jesus "was raised and was seen by Simon." Of this appearance there is no other mention, and the statement by itself can have no evidential value.

The two from Emmaus are still talking with the eleven when Jesus stands in their midst. They are affrighted and think they see a spirit, but he bids them handle him, telling them "a spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see me having." Then he appeases his hunger with broiled fish and

honeycomb. Enjoining on them to remain in Jerusalem, he leads them out towards Bethany, and while in the act of blessing them he is taken up into heaven. Here again we have a person who is by turns a phantom and a substantial personality. This statement you will see precludes any appearance in Galilee, and fixes the ascension on the day of the resurrection.

The account in John is evidently a developed form of this in Luke. On the day of the resurrection, the disciples are sitting with fastened [1] doors, when suddenly Jesus appears among them and proceeds to offer evidence of his corporeality. Eight days later he appears again to confirm the faith of Thomas, who must feel the nail-prints and put his hand into his wounded side before he can believe. The divergence of this account from that of Luke is palpable enough. In Luke the ascension is on the day of the resurrection. Here Jesus is corporeally present eight days later, — corporeal and yet capable of "appearing" in a room whose doors are fastened.[2] Subsequent appearances of Jesus are represented in the last chapter of John, but this chapter formed no part of the original Gospel. Still it is interesting as showing how the legend grew more grossly extravagant as time went on.

Returning to the First Gospel, we find there an

[1] This is certainly the force of "shut for fear of the Jews."

[2] See above.

account of an appearance of Jesus to his disciples in Galilee. The undoubted force of this tradition is that Jesus had not appeared in Jerusalem, and did not afterward. Of the ascension there is no account whatever. And now a word in regard to the ascension. Matthew does not mention it. Mark is equally silent; but in the appendix to this Gospel it is said that "he was taken up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God." John also is silent. So, then, we have three Gospels, out of four, making no final disposition of the risen Jesus. Had he come to life only to die again, and that immediately, the death of ordinary men? Why no mention of this? Did he remain living for some time longer? Had he then become so insignificant that he deserved no further mention? Matthew, Mark, and John leave us entirely in the dark concerning all these things; but Luke's is the Gospel of the Ascension; and, as we have seen, he fixes this on the day of the resurrection. The author of Luke is also the author of Acts. In Acts also, there is an account of the ascension; but there it is said that it was not till forty days after the resurrection. When a writer contradicts himself in this astonishing fashion what reliance can we place on anything he says? And yet Luke wrote his Gospel, as he tells us, after many had "taken in hand" a similar task, and he tells us that it is a record of the things that were "most certainly believed"

or "fully established" among the early Christians. How "certainly" or "fully" we may judge from the fact that ten years later, writing the book of Acts, he changes the ascension from the first day to the fortieth after the resurrection. Could we have any better evidence of the variableness of the tradition, or of the absolutely uncritical nature of the evangelist's method of research? When a writer contradicts himself in this manner, without a word of apology or explanation, what contradictions may we not expect from different writers, and what a quicksand must be the entire New Testament account of both the resurrection and ascension!

And now having reviewed the testimony of the Gospels to the resurrection in almost every particular, what is the net result? Do we find that this testimony is as much more complete and satisfactory than the testimony which we require for any ordinary event, as the resurrection is more remarkable and unusual than any ordinary event; for example, the death of Jesus? This was in the course of nature; and all the accounts agree concerning the manner of it; but here no single account is self-consistent or agrees with any other. The different accounts are self-destructive and mutually destructive all. They agree in hardly a single particular. They differ in particulars of the first importance. Here the appearance of the risen Jesus

is placed in Galilee; there, in direct contravention of his own assertions, in Jerusalem. Here his ascension is definitely placed on the first day; elsewhere, by different writers, later, but without general agreement. Of testimony to the act of rising there is absolutely none. Here the risen Jesus is a man of flesh and blood; elsewhere a bodiless ghost; and so on through all the weary catalogue of difference and contradiction.

Let me revert a moment to my original illustration. I said that if we heard that a train of cars had been seen upon Broadway, moving without any motor power, we should require an incalculable amount of evidence before we believed the statement. If all the witnesses confirmed each other in every particular we should still be in doubt. How then if all the witnesses were divergent and contradictory in their statements; if some said the train was going up Broadway and others said it was going down; some that there were many cars, others that there were few; some that they were white and some that they were black; some that it was in the evening, others that it was in the morning; — and so on? This is a very homely illustration but it is to the point. It does not exaggerate in the least degree the conflicting character of the testimony to the resurrection of Jesus contained in the four Gospels.

But it is admitted and even insisted by many critics of a conservative stamp, that the Gospels are not our strongest evidence for the resurrection. The evidence of Paul, we are assured, is much stronger. His authentic epistles were written from twenty to thirty years after the death of Jesus; from fifty to one hundred years before the Gospels assumed their present shapes, say the less conservative critics: from twenty-five to fifty years say the more conservative; and not only does Paul continually assert and imply the resurrection, but he builds upon it a great scheme of doctrine. What then is the amount and nature of Paul's evidence to the resurrection of Jesus? "On one occasion," says Dr. Sanday, "he gives a very circumstantial account of the testimony on which the belief in the resurrection rested." Let us proceed at once to examine this account. It is the central citadel of the argument for the resurrection. If it is impregnable to the assault of critical science, the failure of the Gospels to establish this in any least degree may yet be made good. In First Corinthians, xv. 3, we read, "For I delivered unto you that which I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that he was raised again on the third day; and that he was seen by Peter, then by the twelve. After that he was seen by above five hundred brethren at once, f whom the greater part remain unto this present

day, but some are fallen asleep. After that he was seen by James, then by all the apostles; and last of all he was seen by me also as by one born out of due time." This is what is called "a very circumstantial account" of the testimony for the resurrection. Could anything be less circumstantial? Is it not the barest summary possible of what Paul considered the evidence for the resurrection? Not a single circumstance is given of any one of the alleged appearances of Jesus. Nevertheless the attempt has frequently been made to connect these different appearances of the risen Jesus with the appearances related in the Gospels. There is good reason to believe that Paul meant his list to be exhaustive of the facts; but of the appearance of Jesus to Mary Magdalene and the other women he has not a word. Why? Because he had not heard of these appearances, or because he did not believe in them? On either supposition the omission deducts something from the testimony of the Gospels, already a minus quantity. The first appearance specified is to Peter. This is supposed to correspond to the words in Luke, "and was seen of Simon." It is quite possible that it refers to the same tradition; but in Luke not a circumstance is given, and the other Gospels mention no such appearance. To attach any weight to such a statement therefore would be the height of folly. The next appearance in Paul's list is to the twelve.

This has been identified with the appearances in Luke[1] and John[2] which we have already considered. If justly so, it can have no evidential value over and above that of those accounts, which we have seen to be mutually and self-destructive. The next appearance mentioned by Paul — to above five hundred brethren at once — is identified with the Galilean appearance in Matthew. If rightly, the account in Matthew is a damaging commentary. If the identification is doubtful, then the omission of all mention of such a striking and glorious manifestation of the risen Jesus from the Gospels, points to the weakness of the tradition on this head. There is nothing in Paul's words to imply that he had ever spoken on the subject with one of the five hundred spectators. That any such number of disciples could have been gathered anywhere, within a short time after the death of Jesus, it is impossible to believe. The appearance to James is not mentioned in any of the four Gospels, but in the "Gospel according to the Hebrews" such an appearance is recorded in an exceedingly apocryphal form. The appearance "to all the apostles" cannot be identified with any appearance in the Gospels, and only proves the shifty character of the tradition twenty years after the death of Jesus.

It is argued that Paul's acquaintance with the

[1] Luke xxiv. 36. [2] John xx. 19.

apostles must have been the basis of his assurance; but his acquaintance with them was inconsiderable. After his conversion he did not go to them but retired into Arabia. After three years he went to Jerusalem and stayed fifteen days with Peter, — seeing nothing of the other apostles, — and fourteen years elapsed before he went to Jerusalem again. He boasted that the apostles had added nothing to his knowledge of Jesus. Still there can be no doubt that the passage we have been considering reflects with sufficient accuracy the tradition of the Church A. D. 57, nor that the apostles held substantially to this tradition; but as to the nature of the different appearances of Jesus, Paul's statement tells us nothing, and but for its concluding clause we should be left wholly in doubt as to his own opinion.

But this concluding clause is exceedingly significant: "and last of all he was seen of me also." Here again not a single circumstance is vouchsafed to us. This is a great misfortune; for, as Paul makes no distinction between his sight of the risen Jesus and that of the others, if he had told us the circumstances of his experience, we should know, at least, what he thought of the others'. That Paul thought he had seen the risen Jesus, and that he considered his sight of him as good as any other, — so much is certain. Now it is common to suppose that Paul refers to what is generally spoken of as his

conversion on his way from Jerusalem to Damascus. Three different accounts of this, more or less contradictory, are given in Acts; but Paul nowhere refers in his own writings to this event, — an astonishing fact if there was any such in his experience. He dates his conversion from no such event, but from a subjective experience of the truth and power of Christ's religion; but even supposing that it was this event which he had in mind when he wrote, "and last of all he was seen of me also," and again, "Have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord?" — this sight of Jesus must have been years after his death. That it was a sight of the body of Jesus which hung upon the cross there is not an intimation, nor indeed that he saw Jesus at all. He saw an intolerable light and heard, or imagined that he heard, the voice of Jesus. If Paul really considered this a valid manifestation of the risen Jesus, nothing could be more weakening than such an opinion on his part to his testimony to the resurrection. It remands all the previous appearances to the same province of visionary exaltation. The intellectual force of Paul is cited as an evidence that he was not a visionary person. What, not when he himself tells us that on one occasion he was "caught up into the third heaven, — whether in the body or out of the body he knew not, — and heard unspeakable things?" But, as I have said, Paul's sight of the risen Jesus cannot be identified with

the event on the Damascus road. Of its nature he has not vouchsafed to us one word. Whatever it was, it was something which occurred years after the death of Jesus, and it must have been something entirely different from the appearance of Jesus in the same body with which he died, the resurrection of which is represented with much inconsistency in the four Gospels.

So much for the testimony of Paul. If, as Dr. Sanday says, it is stronger than the testimony of the Gospels, the testimony of the Gospels must be the weakest of all testimony. It is indeed; and the combined testimony of the Gospels and Paul's Epistles is inadequate to establish the historical character of any extraordinary event, much more one so remarkably extraordinary as the return of a man, actually dead, to life, and his ascension into heaven "with his flesh and bones." That men could believe this centuries ago, when the learning of the few was as superstitious as the ignorance of the many, I can easily understand. That the ignorant and superstitious of the present time, who know nothing of the laws of evidence, who have no appreciation of the inviolable sanctity of the natural order of the world, and no perception that it is men's growing faith in this which marks the hours of progress on the great dial of history, — that such can still, in this last quarter of the nineteenth century, regard the evidence of the New

Testament as sufficient to support the physical resurrection of Jesus is not strange; but it is passing strange that men of intelligence, of culture, of learning, and of apparent honesty, can be of this opinion. I cannot understand it. The evidence for the physical resurrection of Jesus in the New Testament is less conclusive than that which a criminal judge in one of our city courts might properly require to convict a common thief of petty larceny. I have said this before, and I repeat it with renewed conviction that it does not state the case too strongly. The utter insufficiency of the evidence for the resurrection of Jesus cannot be overstated.

But we are told that where there is so much smoke there must be some fire; that where there is so much belief that something happened, something must have happened, — if not the physical resurrection, then something else. Agreed, and still the something that occurred may have been a very modest something which gradually, through various processes of accretion, attained to a considerable bulk. It is not necessary to suppose that the tradition of the New Testament was the result of any one event. Different parts of it we can trace to different sources. One part is the reflection of Old Testament texts; another of actual sayings of Jesus, sadly misunderstood; another of unconscious exaggeration; another of the more or

less conscious endeavor to harmonize incongruous elements. Besides all these sources of the tradition, was there something more? I am inclined to answer, Yes. What was it? Many have said it was the resuscitation of Jesus from apparent death, and they have argued their case with a great deal of ingenuity. Even our dear friend, Dr. Furness, is inclined to this idea in its most poetic form. Of course such a resuscitation would have no theological significance. It would be no crowning miracle. It would not be a miracle at all. It would neither vindicate the Messianic idea of Jesus nor our personal immortality. Still, if it were a fact it would be worth while to know it, painful and barren as it would be. But the evidence for such a fact, though it would be the immediate inference from any certainty that Jesus was seen alive after his burial, is wholly insufficient. What is infinitely more likely is that there was some visionary experience arising from the intensely excited condition of the disciples' minds after the death of their great teacher. Coleridge said he had no doubt that Dr. Johnson saw the Cock-Lane ghost; he only doubted whether the ghost was there for him to see. I have myself little doubt that the disciples saw Jesus on one or more occasions after his death. I am very sure however, that he was not there for them to see. What seemed objective was the projection of an

ideational state. Here was no miracle. The records of morbid psychology abound in such phenomena; and not only in connection with a single person, but in connection with many persons, altogether and at once, seeing the same projected image of an ideational state. Nothing is so contagious as this condition of the mind. Given the initial experience, and no one is willing to be left behind. At the burning of the Crystal Palace hundreds of persons watched for an hour or more the agonies of an escaped animal upon the roof; but all the time the animal which they were pitying was safe and sound, and what they saw was a piece of tin-roofing, shrivelled in the flames. Where there is less basis for a common vision than there was here, the projection of the ideational state is even more contagious.

Given such an experience on one or more occasions, and the legend of the resurrection was sure to be developed, soon or late, into its present bulk. We have reason to believe that the scene of this experience was Galilee. Matthew and Mark, you will remember, suggest an appearance in Galilee exclusive of any at Jerusalem. The indications are that the original tradition embodied this Galilean appearance; that all the rest is subsequent accretion and embellishment. The indications also are that the original tradition did not include any stay upon the earth, if any physical resurrection. It was the glorified Jesus who was seen; and there-

fore in the original tradition, there was no ascension. The resurrection and ascension were one and the same thing. This is Paul's thought as well. Though he has so much to say about the resurrection, he has not a word concerning any ascension or any period of physical life upon the earth after the resurrection. Such is the most reasonable account that can be given of the causes that were operative in producing the New Testament tradition. They are not simple, but exceedingly complex: an ideational state projecting itself from minds morbidly excited; inferences from certain Old Testament texts, and certain words of Jesus; unconscious exaggeration; more or less conscious adaptation of part to part, and all to certain ends; — these were the elements which combined to make up the tradition of the resurrection which has come down to us.

"Nothing is here for tears; nothing to wail." Different as is this result from the average belief of Christendom, there is nothing in it directly, or by implication, that need cause any rational being a moment's trouble or alarm; for we have seen that even if the resurrection could be proved to have been a fact, it could not affect the question of our personal immortality; but who shall say how much the natural supports of this have been weakened by centuries of reliance on a single miraculous occurrence? I dare believe that when the last vestige

of belief in this occurrence has been stripped away, the hope of immortality, committed to the natural reason of mankind, will enter on a new career of unexampled power and glory. Nor need the supernaturalist be sad because his miracle of miracles has lost all standing-ground. Once certain that the resurrection was a fact, and law would straightway adopt it into its ever widening sphere. The fact would only prove that under certain conditions, seldom realized, the phenomenon of death is not absolutely final. The supernatural would be as far as ever from being demonstrated. The would-be supernaturalist may demur at this, but the wise man will rejoice; for the wise man welcomes every fresh evidence of the sublime coherency, the invariable order of phenomena. The more coherency, the more invariableness, the more absolute our confidence in the Infinite and Eternal One.

There was another burial of Jesus than that in the fresh rock-hewn sepulchre of the New Testament tradition. It was in a tomb where thousands were already buried, buried alive under the forms and ceremonies of an effete religion. Into this tomb the friends of Jesus, the apostles and the brothers who, in his lifetime, had given him no countenance, made haste to carry him; not his emaciated form, not his nail-wounded flesh, but the real man, — his thought, his spirit. But from

this burial of Jesus there was indeed a resurrection; and the angel who rolled away the stone of the sepulchre was no supernatural being, with his countenance like lightning, and his raiment white as snow; no, but a man who, according to his own description, was "in bodily presence weak, and in speech contemptible." Nevertheless there was that in him which was sufficient for the burden that was laid upon him. With mighty, ringing strokes he hewed his way through manifold obstructions, straight to the spirit of Jesus, — his inmost thought and life, — and bade it rise up and come forth; and even so it did, and Christianity, that might else have been only a Jewish sect, losing itself in arid wastes of pedantry and ritual after a few generations, entered upon a career of universal influence. This was the real resurrection of Jesus, the triumph of his essential spirit over the Judaizing narrowness of the Church of the Apostles, and it was a resurrection of infinitely greater significance than any impossible resuscitation of his mortal body; and Paul of Tarsus, the man through whom it was accomplished, was of such mind and heart and will, that, in comparison with him, all bent with toil and scarred with battle though he was, the dazzling brightness of any legendary angel is "no light, but rather darkness visible."

VII.

THE DEIFICATION.

"More than anything else, it was just then important that the power to organize society and create the institutions of the future should be a moral power; and that was the same as saying that it should rest on a religious conviction, held with unreasoning fervor, defined in a symbol positive enough to enlist, like a flag, the passionate loyalty of multitudes of men. A decaying civilization, a perishing social fabric, a political framework battered and just yielding before a frightful tempest of invasion, a decrepit paganism, guilty of vices that might not be named and cruelties not to be recalled without horror, — these were on one side; and on the other, the sublime faith, held with whatever of unreason, turbulence, or feud, that Almighty God had once lived bodily among men, and that He did really, in person, lead them now in the fight against His enemies."

JOSEPH HENRY ALLEN.

VII.

THE DEIFICATION.

THE phrase, "an epoch-making book," is a capital one where it is well deserved, but it is frequently applied to books, damp from the press, which are a nine-days' wonder, and then go down into well merited oblivion; but the *Cur Deus Homo* of Anselm, the great scholar-bishop of the eleventh century, was indeed an epoch-making book. It revolutionized the doctrine of the atonement. For centuries before Anselm, the death of Jesus had been regarded as a price paid to the devil for the liberation of souls legally his, and doomed to everlasting suffering on account of Adam's sin; but since the time of Anselm the death of Jesus has been regarded as a price paid to the Almighty, enabling him to remit the natural penalty of Adam's sin without any subordination of the claims of justice to the pleadings of mercy, the sufferings of Jesus being regarded as an equivalent for the remitted sufferings of all who might be saved. *Cur Deus Homo* means "why God was made man."

It is not exactly the opposite of this problem that we are to consider this morning: *Why* the man Jesus was made God? It is, *How* he was made God; the process through which the conception of him in men's minds passed, so that, from being at first regarded simply and entirely as a man, his deity was at length asserted in terms as clear as the nature of language would permit.[1]

You will discover, as I proceed, that it is not my object in this discourse to claim the testimony of the New Testament throughout in favor of a purely humanitarian conception of Jesus. There is no reason why I should be anxious to do this, for if the teaching of the New Testament were as expressive of the deity of Jesus as the Nicene creed, or the still more dogmatic Athanasian, it would not be conclusive of the fact. Our present knowledge of the New Testament is such that it precludes all use of it as an authority over and above the measure of its intrinsic rationality. To proceed on any other principle than this is a species of intellectual immorality for any person who is decently informed concerning the New Testament. Whatever then the teachings of the New Testament prove to be concerning the nature of Jesus, the facts remain the same. The teachings

[1] The *Paulus* of F. C. Baur, his *First Three Christian Centuries*, and Pfleiderer's *Paulinism* are the most valuable studies that I know of this development.

of the New Testament are not conclusive of any speculative truth. The rational religionist can approach them without any bias. If the deity of Jesus were taught with unmistakable clearness upon every page, he would be in no wise bound to accept it. It would still remain for him to consider the intrinsic rationality of this doctrine, with no more prejudgment than if he had found it in the Mohammedan Koran or the Buddhist Dhammapada.

What we do actually find in the New Testament is not a perfectly homogeneous exposition of the doctrine of the nature of Jesus, but an exposition or incidental statement that exhibits much variety; which variety betrays the character of a development of which the starting-point is found in the Synoptic Gospels, Matthew, Mark, and Luke, and the culmination in the Fourth Gospel. This development does not then exactly synchronize with the order of time in which the New Testament writings appeared. The earliest writings of the New Testament are the genuine Epistles of Paul, extending from about A. D. 53 to A. D. 63. These Epistles represent a more developed form of the doctrine of Christ's nature than do the Synoptic Gospels; but this is only what we should expect from what we know of Paul and his relation to the early church, and from the character of his letters in comparison with that of the Synoptic Gospels. These Gospels

reached their present form much later than the Pauline Epistles, but they represent much more perfectly the primitive ideas of the early Christians; for it is not as if they were made at one cast, like the Pauline Epistles. They are, as they now stand, the last result of a long process of traditional aggregation. The comparative unconsciousness of their Christology, the absence from them of all daring speculation, indeed of anything that can be called speculation, is convincing that we are here much nearer the fountain-head of Christological development than in the letters of St. Paul; but not even in the Synoptic Gospels have we a perfectly consistent representation of the nature of Jesus. In general, the conception of Mark and Luke is more exalted than that of Matthew, although it is in Matthew that the conception for a moment reaches its highest level, in the words ascribed to Jesus, "All power is given unto me in heaven and on earth." Even this, which is undoubtedly the reflection of the afterglow of pious adulation on the historic character of Jesus, is still within the bounds of a purely humanitarian conception. The idea is of a dignity and office to be bestowed on Jesus by God as a reward of his faithfulness unto death, and through the medium of his resurrection. The dignity and office do not inhere in his essential nature. Nevertheless, this is the highest point reached by the Synoptists. Nowhere

in their representation is there anything which is not fundamentally consistent with the pure humanity of Jesus. When we consider that the Synoptic Gospels did not reach their present form until from sixty to eighty years after the death of Jesus, and that in the mean time the Epistles of Paul had all been written, and the Epistle to the Hebrews, it is astonishing how little they are colored by the tendencies of these important writings. It only proves with what tenacity the human idea of Jesus held its ground, and how slowly the bolder thought of Paul fought its way to general recognition. The Synoptic Gospels are the Gospels of the early church, of the church of the apostles, of the Jewish Christians. They embody their beliefs. And it does not admit of any doubt that the early church, the church of the first century, the Jewish Christian church, was strictly humanitarian in its conception of Jesus; for its central dogma was that Jesus was the Jewish Messiah. Now the Jewish Messiah was never conceived as being anything but a man. The suggestion that he was God, or a being in any such proximity to God as Arianism represented him, would have seemed to any pious Jew utterly blasphemous. With every successive step in the exaltation of Jesus, Judaism became alienated from Christianity more and more; and with his arrival at divine honors ceased the last hope of an extended Jewish Christianity, and the long centuries of con-

flict and of Christian persecution of the Jews began. The Jew-Christians never succumbed to the deified Jesus. They resisted every movement of thought that tended thither.

The Jesus of the Synoptists is a human being. He works miracles, but the power of working miracles was not supposed to be inconsistent with the nature of a human being. It is ascribed to the disciples of Jesus; to various Old Testament personages; even to the enemies of Jesus by Jesus himself: "If I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your children cast them out?" "The Son of Man," is the favorite Synoptic designation. "The Son of God," is used infrequently;[1] and as used is everywhere *the title of an office with which Jesus is invested*, not the designation of a peculiar nature. It has no reference whatever to the idea of miraculous birth. Possibly, however, it suggested this idea. Evidently the doctrine of miraculous birth formed no part of the earliest conception of Jesus' nature or origin; for side by side with the stories of his miraculous birth in Matthew and Luke, we have genealogies tracing the line of his descent from David through Joseph, and these genealogies must have been written before the stories of miraculous birth became current. After this the line of Davidic descent was traced through Mary. These stories form no part of "the triple tradition"

[1] Never by Jesus himself.

which underlies the Synoptic Gospels. This begins with the baptism of Jesus by John. So does our Second Gospel. The Gospel according to the Hebrews, the Jewish-Christian Gospel of the Ebionites and Nazarenes until these Jewish-Christian sects became extinct, has no miraculous birth, no legends of the infancy, and begins with the simple statement: "There was a certain man named Jesus, about thirty years old, who chose us out;" and yet some of the greatest scholars of the early church regarded this Gospel as of equal authority with our Synoptics. Doubtless it represents the starting-point of Christian legend and doctrine concerning Jesus: "There was a certain man named Jesus, about thirty years old, who chose us out." Here, from the descent of the spirit at the baptism of Jesus, as in the Synoptics, dates the Messianic dignity of Jesus. Not only was he purely human, but he was not invested with the attributes of his official station till he had come well nigh to middle age. The stories of his miraculous birth are an attempt to carry back his dignity a step further. These make his Messiahship congenital; but they do nothing more. In the Synoptics there is not a hint of those doctrines of pre-existence which play so conspicuous a part in Paul, in the Epistle to the Hebrews, and in the Fourth Gospel. The miraculous birth of Jesus did not detract from his humanity in the eyes of the

mythologists who fashioned the legend of such a birth. Miraculous birth was attributed to Isaac and to Samuel, but their entire humanity was never for a moment doubted. The germ of the doctrine of Christ's sinless nature appears in the language ascribed to John the Baptist: "I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?" for the baptism of John implied the consciousness of sinfulness. In the Gospel according to the Hebrews, Jesus is made to say, "What sin have I committed that I should go and be baptized of him?" and then adds, "Unless my saying this very thing is sinful." An exquisite moral perception went to the framing of this story. Its maker saw that for Jesus to consider himself sinless, would be a sign of moral imperfection. No wonder that the tendency to exalt the person of Jesus more and more allowed the Gospel which contained this penetrating remark to lapse into obscurity, although it had, as had no other, the look of an authentic apostolic document. To sum up: the Jesus of the Synoptic Gospels is a man. No attributes ascribed to him, no circumstances of his career, make this statement in any degree doubtful. How then? Do not the Synoptists furnish a single item of the process we are met here to consider: How Jesus was made God? They furnish certain preluding notes. The glorious attributes with which Jesus was invested after death, according to

Matthew, are prophetic of the subsequent disposition to find these attributes inhering in his nature. The attempt, by means of the miraculous birth, to make his Messianic dignity congenital, is prophetic of the later disposition to carry it back into the æons of a pre-existent state.

In the Epistles of Paul the glorification of Jesus is much further advanced, and, though it stops far short of actual deification, it abounds in phrases that might easily bear such an interpretation, and paved the way for it whenever one should come daring enough to trust himself to such a way, as unsubstantial as the floating bridge which turned to flame under the flying feet of Galahad, when to his blamelessness was granted the first, last, only vision of the Holy Grail. If with Ferdinand Christian Baur we accept as authentic only four of Paul's Epistles out of the fourteen ascribed to him in the New Testament, namely, Romans, the two Corinthians, and Galatians, Paul's theory of Christ's nature is quite homogeneous. If we also accept, as I am inclined to do, with the support of many able critics, First Thessalonians, Colossians, and Philippians, then we have in Paul also a development of which the starting point is found in First Thessalonians, his earliest epistle, the middle point in Romans, Galatians, and Corinthians, and the culmination in Colossians and Philippians. In Thessalonians the conception is hardly different from that of

the Synoptic Gospels. In Romans, Corinthians, and Galatians it has already made a great advance. To the actual historical Jesus, Paul was quite indifferent. He does not quote his words. He does not recount his deeds. He does not dwell on his example. His self-denial is not that of a man among men. It is the laying aside of heavenly glory, and the assumption of a human form. Paul's thought centred not in the historic Jesus but in an ideal Christ of his own conception. This ideal Christ was a man. Paul never calls him God, and would, no doubt, have resented the imputation of any tendency to deify him. But though the Christ of Paul is a man, he is a very different man from the man of the Synoptics. Notice some of his expressions: "There is one God," he says, "and one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus." "Since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection from the dead." "The first man is of the earth earthy; the second man is from heaven." Our common version reads, "the Lord from heaven," but "the Lord" is an interpolation of the later manuscripts. This last expression is the key to Paul's Christology. Christ is a man, but he is "the man from heaven." He is a heavenly man, a pre-existent being. If here and there Paul speaks of the glorified nature of Jesus as the result of his death and resurrection, this is only because his thought has not become entirely homogeneous.

Paul was not a consistent thinker, and if we try to make all that he said hold fast together we shall only weary ourselves without result. This was his first thought, — that Jesus was glorified by his death and resurrection; but this could not satisfy his speculative genius. A glory with which Christ was invested did not satisfy him. He wanted a glory for him that was essential to his personality; and so his death and resurrection became only the means of his resuming a glory which he had ages before his earthly manifestation — the glory of a heavenly, archetypal man. Henceforth to Paul the human life of Jesus was the merest episode in the career of the heavenly man, the ideal Christ of his speculative imagination; and yet, lofty as was Paul's conception of the Christ, he cherished the idea that all men who would might be even such as he. Although an image of the divine glory, he was not less an image of the possible glory of the saints. It was not the character of the historical Jesus that marked Paul's limit of possible human attainment. It was the nature of the heavenly pre-existent Christ. Here is a sufficient proof that however Paul might exalt the attributes of Christ he never thought of him as God.

That he did exalt his attributes in the most daring fashion, his Epistles amply prove, even if we stop short of Philippians and Colossians. Already in Corinthians he is the instrument of the univer-

sal energy of God; but in Colossians he is not so much the instrument of God as a creative, cosmic principle. All things are made not only by him, but for him. He is the end of all creation. This is a decided change from Paul's idea that, at the last, Christ will give back into God's hands the dominion which has been delegated to him, "that God may be all in all;" but I do not think that it is a greater change than a mind so freely speculative as Paul's might easily make. Even the Christ of this conception is not God. He is "the image of the invisible God," "the first-born of every creature." "In him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily." "Who, being in the form of God, did not covet equality with God." As yet no deification, but deification is not far off. Whether Colossians and Philippians are Paul's or not, they represent the natural development of his ideas as they appear in Romans and Corinthians.

In Hebrews, which is certainly not Paul's, and Ephesians, which is somewhat less certainly not his, the doctrine of Christ's nature does not differ much from that in Colossians and Philippians. Ephesians is an echo of Colossians. The Epistle to the Hebrews has much more original force; but while the Christ of this epistle is exalted to the highest cosmical rank, that of the creative principle in virtue of which all things have their being, the writer endeavors to reconcile this awful majesty

with the earthly career of Jesus in a manner to which Paul never condescended. Paul's sinless Christ is the pre-existent heavenly and the risen glorified Christ. It is necessary to his psychology to suppose that the historical Jesus was not free from sin; but the Christ of Hebrews "was tempted in all points even as we are, yet without sin." This by the way. Neither Hebrews nor Ephesians conducts us much, if any, further than Colossians in our inquiry, How Jesus was made God. The subordination of Christ to God is even more emphatic than in Colossians.

The Apocalypse, which was written (A. D. 69), a little later than Hebrews, is somewhat aside from the main line of development. The most exalted epithets are applied to Jesus; the most exalted attributes are assigned to him; but what would be metaphysical in Paul is here rhetorical. The attributes do not inhere in the personality of the Messiah. They are badges of distinction. If, however, anything could be proved by quoting isolated texts, the Apocalypse would be an armory from which believers in the deity of Christ could draw out many a battle-axe and spear.

"A little deeper," said the wounded soldier to the surgeon probing his wound, close to his heart, — "a little deeper, and you will find the emperor." A little deeper, and we shall come to the imperial doctrine of the New Testament concerning the per-

sonality of Christ, — its loftiest expression, considerably advanced beyond that of Paul, even though Colossians be his work. It is of the Fourth Gospel that I now speak; yet even here the advance is more in point of definiteness than in point of exaltation. Various lines of evidence lead up to the conclusion that the Fourth Gospel made its appearance in the second quarter of the second century. Before this time the conceptions of Christ's nature had sought no alliance with the Alexandrian doctrine of the Logos; but now the signs of this alliance began to multiply on every side, and such is their character that we are forbidden to imagine that the Fourth Gospel took the lead and set the fashion in this line of thought. On the contrary, it is absolutely certain that if, at any time during the second and third quarters of the second century, the Fourth Gospel had been generally recognized as a genuine apostolic writing, it must have had more influence than we know it had in shaping the Logos doctrine of the time. Thus Justin Martyr, writing in the middle of the second century, and wholly devoted to the doctrine of the Logos-Christ, develops the doctrine in a manner widely different from that of John, to which his apparent references are so slight and so exceedingly doubtful that many of the wisest critics are inclined to think them only apparent, implying a common stock of phrases of which both Justin and the pseudo-John

availed themselves. Even after the middle of the century the doctrine of the Logos-Christ is developed in a manner quite independent of the Fourth Gospel. The inevitable conclusion is that the Fourth Gospel was one of many and various attempts to state the doctrine of Christ's nature in terms of the Alexandrian philosophy, which, as the most consistent, the most brilliant, the most imaginative, gradually threw every other attempt into the shade. The Gospel having thus achieved a splendid victory on its own merits, its thinly disguised claim to be the apostle John's was easily allowed. The more prestige for the doctrine it contained, the better.

Paul had developed his doctrine of Christ's nature without consciously allying it with the Logos doctrine of the Alexandrians, which indeed was not so generally diffused in his time as it was a century later; but he had developed his doctrine to such a height that the wonder is it did not sooner coalesce with the Logos doctrine.

The idea of the Logos or Word came into Jewish thought from two sides, from Persia and from Greece; from Persia by way of Babylon, from Greece by way of Alexandria. The Persian-Zoroastrian religion taught that God created all things by his *word*. The cosmology in Genesis is of Persian origin. "God *said* let there be light, and there was light." His word is the creative power. Be-

fore the time of Jesus this Word of God had become personified in Jewish thought, most frequently under the name of Wisdom. "Wisdom hath been created before all things," we read in the Book of Proverbs; "Wisdom has been created before all things," in Ecclesiasticus; and in the Wisdom of Solomon, "She is a reflection of the everlasting light, the unspotted mirror of the power of God, and the image of his goodness." The Greek influence contributed to the same tendency of thought. The later followers of Plato, the Neo-Platonists, had personified his doctrine of the divine idea or reason. They called it the first born Son of God, born before the creation of the world, itself the agent of creation. It was the image of God's perfection, the mediator between God and man. Philo Judæus, who was born about twenty years before Jesus, was possessed with these ideas and endeavored to connect them with the Old Testament teachings. He quoted, "Let *us* make man in our own image," to prove that God had an assistant in the work of creation, an assistant who did all the work, thus saving God from any contact with matter, a necessity of the Persian system, imported into Jewish thought. He calls the Logos the "first born Son of God," "Second God," and even "God," but this always in a qualitative, never in a quantitative sense.

On the one hand, then, the writer of the Fourth

Gospel found this doctrine of the Logos; and on the other hand he found a conception of Jesus expressed in terms the most exalted, and bearing a very strong resemblance to the terms of the Logos doctrine of Philo. True, Philo had never dreamed of a human incarnation of the Logos, and Paul had never identified his exalted Christ with the Alexandrian Word. The first to do this was pretty certainly not the writer of the Fourth Gospel. It occurred to many writers at about the same time. To affect an alliance between Christianity and Alexandrian Platonism was the one passionate enthusiasm midway of the second century. Of this enthusiasm the Fourth Gospel is the grandest monument. The opening verses of this Gospel might have been written by Philo Judæus: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men." So far it is Philo speaking in the voice of the evangelist. But Philo never could have written, "And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." To Philo this incarnation of the Logos in a human personality would have seemed a blasphemous proceeding; and even in John the union

of the Logos with the human personality of Jesus is purely verbal. The Logos is "a consuming fire," and shrivels up the human personality. In the Fourth Gospel representation there is little that is really human, and what is so is the survival of traditions which the writer was obliged to respect, not his own thought. In his own thought the life of Jesus was merely a manifestation of the glory of the Word of God. It is this Word that speaks, and not the human Jesus. "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." "I and my Father are one." With such texts as these confronting it, it is marvellous that a humanitarian Christ-doctrine has ever dared appeal to the New Testament in justification of its creed. Humanitarian this is not, but it is still unitarian; unitarian in the most exalted sense, but still unitarian. Without deifying Jesus it could not exalt him further, but it does not deify him. The resemblance is so close to the Alexandrian Philonism that we must allow this the right of an interpreter; and we know that this was extremely careful to insist that the Logos is not God. How could it be, when the prime object of the idea was to introduce something, some one, *not God*, between God and the material universe? To assert the coextensiveness of the Logos with God would have been simply the suicide of the idea. In the Fourth Gospel the doctrine is the same. "The Word was God," it says; but the meaning

here is qualitative, not quantitative. For all the likeness there is difference, and there is subordination: "As the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given the Son to have life in himself." These words express the idea of the independent personality and subordination of the Logos. Thus the New Testament Christ, on the topmost height of his development, though infinitely more than man, is still not God. The Humanitarians certainly cannot claim him; but no more can the Trinitarians. I say this in no spirit of triumph, for I am myself triumphed over as much as the Trinitarians. Do I then abandon my humanitarian conception of Jesus? By no means. The New Testament dictum settles nothing. Any thoughtful person, understanding the method of its development, ought to see that it settles nothing. If the dictum of the Fourth Gospel were final, nothing would remain for us but to consider Jesus, or rather the Christ, as a super-angelic being, coexistent with God, and the Creator of the world, and still not God. This is old-fashioned Unitarianism of the most exalted type, the creed of Arius; but why should we accept the dictum of the Fourth Gospel as final, when we know[1] that is a pseudonymous Gospel, written by some man of daring speculative genius in the sec-

[1] There are competent critics who would not allow this; but no competent critic will pretend that we are certain of the Johannean authorship.

ond quarter of the second century? The dictum of such a Gospel can have no authority for us over and above the amount of its intrinsic rationality.

It would be a wearisome matter to attempt to follow the development of thought, concerning the nature of Christ, for the century and a half between the appearance of the Fourth Gospel, and the great Arian controversy at the beginning of the fourth century. It is a popular fancy that a standard of orthodoxy was furnished in the New Testament writings in the first century, and that all subsequent divergence from this standard was of the nature of heresy. Alas, the history of the first Christian centuries leads us to no such conclusion! What we find is that the four Gospels attained to general recognition as *the* Gospels only at the close of the second century; that this recognition was only general, not universal; that the canon of the New Testament fluctuated through a wide range for some two or three centuries longer. In the meantime the doctrine of Christ's nature was continually in dispute; not strangely either, for within the limits of the most honored books of the New Testament the conception of Christ's nature fluctuated between two widely separated points, at one of which the conception was purely human, and at the other on the verge of deity.

The nature of Christ was a matter of free speculation for a period of at least two hundred and fifty

years. In the course of this time every possible shade of opinion was entertained. The Jewish Christians, who were becoming relatively less significant all the time, held to the more humanitarian view. In the Greek and Roman world the tendency was to ever greater exaltation. This tendency was facilitated by the worship of the Roman emperor. This worship had accustomed the majority to think of a man as God. This worship, satisfying so long as the Flavians and Antonines held up the honor of the state, naturally sought another and worthier object when the emperors became too manifestly ungodlike in their life and rule. The deification of the emperor has generally been regarded as the lowest depth of paganism. On the contrary, it corresponded with the most beneficent sway of the empire and the highest personal character of the emperors, men who endeavored to deserve the appalling honors that were heaped upon them; and it would be difficult to overestimate the contribution of the imperial worship, — the worship of the emperor as God, — to the deification of Jesus.

A few quotations, taken almost at random, will show how various the opinions were concerning the nature of Christ for some centuries. Justin Martyr, midway of the second century, while himself identifying Christ with the Logos and with the God who appeared to Abraham, freely allowed that there were Christians, whose right to their opinion

he did not dispute, who believed that Jesus was "a man of men." What weighty thinking went to the solving of these difficult problems can be inferred from the statement of Theophilus of Antioch, one of the most distinguished writers of the second century, who, guarding against the notion that the Logos was another God, declared that God made man and woman both together, lest it should be supposed that one God made man; another, woman! Much of the thinking done was of about this quality. In the Clementine Homilies (second-century writings) Paul is accused of sheer polytheism in making Christ another God. These Homilies assert the pure humanity of Jesus. Irenæus, on the other hand, insists that those who call Christ mere man are in a state of death. Gnostic Christianity taught that Christ was the Son of the Supreme God; Jesus, the Son of the Creator, who was not the Supreme God. These two beings of different origin were united in Jesus Christ. Be patient with this nonsense. It is necessary to consider it if you would know what sort of thinking it was that developed the doctrine of Christ's nature. Then there were the Docetæ, who contended that Jesus had no real flesh and blood but was a phantasm. This notion is combated in the New Testament: "Every spirit that confesseth not that Christ has come in the flesh, is not of God." This notion was exceedingly common and held its own for a long time.

It pleased not Tertullian. To him the danger of denying the humanity of Christ seemed greater than that of denying his divinity. "Common people," he said, "think of Christ as a man. Count him a man if you please;" and yet Tertullian was the first to introduce the idea and the name Trinity into Christian theology. This about A. D. 200, when it made no impression, and was not followed up by Tertullian himself or any other writer. Midway of the third century Sabellius advocated the doctrine that Father, Son, and Holy Spirit were all emanations of the Logos, which he identified with the Supreme God. Christ, he said, was only a transient manifestation of the Logos. For a time this quaternity, this four-fold mystery of the divine nature, threatened to be the orthodox doctrine of the church; but, at a later stage of the controversy, his doctrines were pronounced heretical, as also were those of Paul of Samosata, who argued that "Christ was not God by nature but became so by progressive development." Origen, who died A. D. 254, insisted on the distinctness of Christ from God, and his subordination to him, but announced the doctrine of his eternal generation. This was the doctrine that was to be stamped as orthodox in the great council of Nicæa, nearly three quarters of a century after the death of Origen.

Consider the immediate course of events which led up to this decision. No country so much as

Egypt, no city so much as Alexandria, influenced the development of Christianity for four hundred years. In the year 318 an Alexandrian bishop, Alexander by name, publicly charged Arius, one of his presbyters, with holding erroneous doctrines of Christ's nature. Arius retorted the charge. The controversy widened until it included Egypt, Libya, and Palestine under its baleful shadow. Arius was excommunicated by a synod of Egyptian and Libyan bishops; but with his excommunication the number of his adherents increased rather than diminished. He was a man of great intellectual force. He believed what he believed. He was an ardent propagandist. He set his doctrines to the music of the theatres and chanted them in a loud, passionate voice. Before long, hundreds were chanting them, — priests, boatmen, bakers, people of all sorts. Said Gregory of Nyssa: "Every corner and nook of the city is full of men who discuss incomprehensible subjects; the streets, the markets, the people who sell old clothes, the money-changers, the dealers in provisions. Ask a man how many oboli it comes to, — he gives you a dogmatic discourse on generated and ungenerated being. Inquire the price of bread, — you are answered, 'The Father is greater than the Son, and the Son is subordinate to the Father.' Ask if your bath is ready, — you are answered, 'The Son of God was created out of nothing.'"

The animating motive of Arius was apparently to steer the ship of dogma clear of the rock of Ditheism, the notion of two Gods. Two beings, one unbegotten, the other eternally begotten, seemed to him no better than two Gods. As for himself, he would not say that "*there was a time* when Christ was not," but "*there was* when Christ was not." He was before time; but God was before him. How clear this is; how palpable; how wholesome; how nutritious! Then, too, Arius stuck at the word "begotten." If Christ was begotten, then, as begotten from the unbegotten, he must inherit the unbegottenness of his begetter! He was not begotten, then, said Arius; he was not of one substance with the Father; he was created out of nothing. There is not wanting evidence that the opposite party was animated by the same motive as Arius. Its aim was not so much to exalt the person of Jesus as to avoid Ditheism, and the best way to avoid this seemed to insist on the oneness of Christ with God. He was too great to be another. A being created before time, and himself the creator of all things but himself, was sure to be another God sooner or later. In vain did Arius insist that his "createdness" and his "moment when he was not," nullified the danger. The Athanasians could not see it so. Thus dreading one and the same evil, the two parties took different methods of avoiding it, and in their hot insistence, each on its own way,

made every corner of the Roman Empire ring with angry altercation.

The Emperor Constantine, who had become sole emperor A. D. 323, was honestly disgusted to find the new religion which he had adopted, and over which he had thrown the protecting ægis of his imperial power, already rent with violent controversy. He wrote a letter to the principal disputants assuring them that the matter in dispute was "of small or scarcely least importance," that "there was no unvarying standard of judgment," that the Scripture passages on which the controversy turned were "inexplicable." It was a wise letter, but a drop of oil upon the raging Atlantic would not have less effect. The controversy waxed hotter and hotter until, in the spring of 325, the bishops of the church were summoned to meet in Nicæa and settle the dispute. This was the first Œcumenical (meaning imperial) council; the first attempt to bring together all the bishops of the church. The hand of Constantine was felt in every part of the arrangements. No modern senator ever subordinated a political convention to his will more perfectly than Constantine this convention of bishops, and no modern delegates were ever more subservient to "the machine" than were these bishops to the imperial will. They were many of them simple men, who had never seen an emperor before, and he did his best to dazzle them. It is probable that he

could have got a majority for any creed that he might urge on the assembly; but he was a shrewd man, and, instead of forcing the majority to come over to his side, he went over to the side of the majority.

On his arrival at Nicæa he was immediately flooded with rolls of parchment, the letters of those days, each one detailing some personal grievance of this or that bishop. Indeed, to lay their personal grievances before the emperor seemed the only reason why the majority had come to the council. No sooner had the council been opened by the emperor than the bishops filled the air with mutual accusations of all sorts of baseness, demanding of the emperor to right their various wrongs; but he, ordering a brazier to be brought, made a burnt-offering of all their parchments, and then read them a wholesome lesson on the duties of their office and the need of mutual forbearance. The theological controversy then began. The only argument recorded is that of Nicholas of Myra, which was literally "a knock-down argument," for he gave Arius such a blow in the jaw that this offending member must have been incapacitated for its legitimate functions for a time. His creed, however, was produced and read to the assembly. A storm of disapprobation greeted it and it was torn in fragments by the opposing party. Another creed, that of Eusebius of Cæsarea, was read and disapproved

and torn in pieces. To read this creed, though Eusebius was himself an Arian, any one would suppose that it might give satisfaction to the most orthodox. It had given satisfaction to the emperor, who, before the meeting of the council, had leaned undisguisedly to the Arian side; but the very fact that this creed was satisfactory to the Arians insured its condemnation by the opposite party. What this party wanted was a creed that Arius could not accept; and it was furnished them, or, at least, its crucial word, by one of the Arian party, Eusebius of Nicomedia, who declared that "to assert the Son to be uncreated would be to say that he was *homoōusian*, that is, *of one substance* with the Father." Great was the excitement caused by this letter. It was torn in pieces, as the obnoxious creeds had been before it, and then a creed was fashioned by the Athanasian party in which the word *homoōusian* was embodied. So hateful to the Arians, it was just the word the Athanasians wanted. The creed, so far as it concerned the nature of Christ, affirmed belief in "one Lord, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, begotten of the Father; only begotten, that is to say, of the substance of the Father; God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten not made, being *of one substance* with the Father, by Whom all things were made, both things in heaven and things on earth." "But those that say, 'there was when he was not,'

and 'before he was begotten he was not,' and that 'he came into existence from what was not,' or who profess that the Son of God is of a different 'person' or 'substance,' or that he is created, or changeable, or variable, are anathematized by the Catholic church." At once the emperor threw himself with his whole weight on the side of this statement. What he wanted was unanimity, and he cared little how it was gained. To Eusebius he privately confessed that he understood *homoüsian* to mean *homoiüsian*, —"of the same substance," to mean "of like substance," and advised Eusebius to sign with this private understanding! All of the Arian bishops, except some five or six, proved their subserviency and duplicity by following his example. Constantine, determined to do nothing by halves, issued a decree of banishment against all who refused to sign the creed; denounced Arius and his disciples as impious, and ordered that he and his disciples should be called Porphyrians, and his books burned, under penalty of death to any one who perused them.

Thus it was that Jesus was made God. It was the work of some three centuries, — this deification of the Man of Nazareth. Even now much remained in dispute concerning the nature of Christ. New controversies necessitated new councils. One was the Monophosite controversy: Had Christ two natures? The answer was affirmative. Then came

the Monothelite controversy: Had Christ two wills? Again the answer was affirmative. The Nestorian controversy was mixed up with these: Was Mary to be called *theotokos*, the Mother of God? Yes, answered the council of Ephesus; at which the passions developed were so intense that one bishop felled another to the earth, and trampled him to death amid the sympathetic shoutings of the assailant's party. Arianism died hard; it was the creed of the great Northern races that overwhelmed the Roman empire; but the decision of Nicæa was the beginning of the end, and it was the culmination of the process of Christ's deification. Further than that it was impossible for words to go in asserting the deity of Christ. I have no sympathy to waste on either party in this momentous struggle. The creeds of Arius and Athanasius are alike irrational to me, alike blasphemous in their garrulity concerning things of which no man has a right to speak. I have wearied you with their pretentious foolishness, only because it was necessary for me to do so in order to show you How Jesus was made God; and this you have now seen.

And having seen it, is not the course which we have travelled, let me ask you, a sufficient condemnation of the goal to which we have arrived? Is not the history of the development of the doctrine of the deity of Christ all the refutation of this

doctrine that any reasonable man should ask for or desire? And what a commentary is this history upon the part which the doctrine of Christ's deity has played in Christendom for fifteen hundred years! Everywhere this doctrine has been spoken of as if it were a direct revelation from the Almighty, and as such it has been claimed to be a mystery which it is impious for us to dare to criticise, or to try to fathom with our natural intelligence; and what have we found to be the facts? That within the limits of the New Testament this doctrine is nowhere distinctly taught; that in those parts of the New Testament which embody the traditional conception of Jesus, as it developed in the course of sixty to eighty years after his death, however exaggerated in some particulars, is still the conception of Jesus as a purely human being. It is only in those parts of the New Testament where tradition gives place to free and daring speculation, that the human personality of Jesus is resolved into the fiery mist of metaphysical ideas; and still the leading Pauline conception of Jesus is as a heavenly archetypal man, and whether it is Paul or another[1] who resolves him into a cosmic principle, the lines of difference and subordination are never blurred. In the Fourth Gospel, a magnificent *tour de force*, dating from the second quarter of the second century, the highest point of the New Tes-

[1] In Colossians and Philippians.

tament development is reached, and it is still below the point of deity. Moreover we see this Gospel to have been only one of many second-century attempts to express an exalted conception of Jesus in the terms of a fanciful and imaginative system of philosophy, the Neo-Platonism of Alexandria. For two centuries after this attempt we find the doctrine of Christ's nature still a matter of free speculation; the speculation frequently of men as credulous, as fanciful, as irrational, as any that have contributed to the sum of human thought. We see the eagle of victory hovering uncertainly about the rival standards, not knowing upon which to perch. We see the orthodoxy of one period, the heterodoxy of another; and we see a word, "homoousian," branded in a synod of the third century as heretical, in the following century become the symbol *par excellence* of the orthodox faith. We see this symbol triumph in the council of Nicæa, in virtue of imperial manipulation, and in pursuance of the example of imperial duplicity, after it has come to the surface of that wild waste of theological and personal acrimony of which the council of Nicæa was the concrete expression. There are degrees of human imperfection in this history of a doctrine's rise and growth, but where along its ever-widening course shall we look for any tributary stream of supernatural influence or illumination? The Synoptic Gospels are an agglomeration

of traditional elements, receiving their final editorial impress from we know not what hands. Nothing that Paul claims for himself, and nothing that his letters contain, demands for them any authoritative force over and above the intrinsic reasonableness of their ideas. His was a great mind entangled in the meshes of rabbinical interpretation and philosophy. We find him basing a stupendous argument upon the idiomatic use of a singular for a plural noun (seed for seeds); we find him constantly reflecting the ideas of his time, and, in his individual speculations, rash, fanciful, imaginative to the last degree. The case of the Fourth Gospel is not different. The doctrine of the Logos is here fundamental; and this, wildly fanciful in the Alexandrian schools, does not become any less so through being incorporated in a Christian Gospel. At this point we pass from the New Testament into the general thought of early Christendom for which the Protestant Christian claims no supernatural inspiration; and the Romanist claims it only because it is extremely convenient, and indeed absolutely necessary for him to do so, not because anything in the order of events suggests such inspiration. The impartial observer, looking back upon the early Christian centuries, the centuries which completed the doctrine of the deity of Christ, sees that they had no immunity from the errors or the passions which beset the general course of history. He sees that

men of quite exceptional intellectual force were fettered by the imperfect philosophical systems of their time, and led astray by the then universal passion for fathoming the unfathomable mysteries of infinite being. He sees that many baser motives contributed to the final result, and that the men who constituted the council of Nicæa, including its imperial head, were not such that infallibility is to be predicated of their thought or action; and so I ask again, Is not the history of Christ's deification all the refutation of the doctrine that an intelligent and candid person should desire? Yes, and what then? Why, then the dignity and beauty of the human Jesus remain to us a heritage of incomparable worth; and for the rest—"our sufficiency is of God," the One Infinite and Eternal, whose power and wisdom and beneficence need nothing supplementary; whose nature is so unapproachable that the exaltation of any other being into special relationship with him, to say nothing of equality or unity, is reverent of such a being only at the cost of a much deeper reverence for "his Father and our Father, his God and our God."

University Press: John Wilson and Son, Cambridge.